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THE

SACRAMENTS

AND

SACRAMENTAL ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH:

BEING A PLAIN EXPOSITION

OF THEIR HISTORY, MEANING, AND EFFECTS.

BY THE REV.

JOHN HENRY BLUNT, M.A. F.S.A.

AUTHOR OF "THE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE OF PASTORAL WORK," "HOUSEHOLD THEOLOGY," &c. &c.

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PREFACE.

THIS book needs to be introduced to the reader with an apology for its size. The subjects with which it professes to deal extend over the whole range of Christian Theology, and of the Christian Life, and require many large volumes instead of one small one for their full elucidation. But the very extent of the ground which they thus cover has helped to hinder a condensed and comprehensive idea of their character from being formed by those who do not make Theology their study. The ground has been mapped out, indeed, but the map itself is a library so full of details, that it is in the power of very few to obtain the books

in which it is to be found, or to spare the time for accurately distinguishing between the leading and important features of it, and those which are of a more subordinate character.

The consequence of this has been that the "proportion of the faith" has in no case suffered so much as in that of the Sacraments, and of those analogous rites which are of a sacramental nature. Most incomplete and most indefinite notions have been entertained respecting them; and, too often, unimportant and outlying parts of the truth about them have been made to obscure vital and substantial doctrines, until the idea of a Sacrament was quite perverted, and a metaphysical theory of mental reaction replaced the the Divine system of supernatural grace.

This little work, then, is intended to be a sketch map of Sacramental Theology, and no more. It gives the leading lines of truth respecting the subjects of which it treats, and it leaves further

details to be sought for in much more voluminous treatises. But since many must feel, with the Author, how desirable it is that accurate knowledge of these leading truths should be more widely spread, it is hoped that the volume will be found an useful addition to our religious literature, not only as supplying information, but far more as helping to give "form" and "point" to practical devotion, and endeavours to lead a Christian life.

August 21*st*, 1867.

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THE SACRAMENTS.

INTRODUCTION.

THE DIVINE SYSTEM OF SACRAMENTS.

SACRAMENTS[1] and sacramental ordinances are the means by which Divine power counteracts the operation of original and actual sin; in some

[1] The word 'Sacrament' is an old Roman word consecrated to Christian use. 'Sacramentum' was used with reference to several things, but chiefly, as it seems, to the oath by which Roman citizens dedicated themselves to military service. But all other uses of the word were absorbed, or made obsolete, by the ecclesiastical meaning given to it in early Christian writers. Probably the earliest translators of the Scriptures into Latin rendered the Hebrew and Greek words signifying mystery by 'sacramentum,' as in Wisdom ii. 22, "As for the mysteries [sacramenta] of God, they knew them not;" and 1 Tim. iii. 16, "Great is the mystery [sacramentum] of godliness." But certainly the Latin fathers gave the modern theological sense to the word at a very early period: and when Peter Lombard, in the twelfth century, defined a Sacrament as "a visible sign of

cases by their application as preventives, in other cases by their use as remedies. Their efficacy is, in all cases, derived from their association with the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, either as the source of spiritual power, or as the healing substance provided for the restoration of our nature to spiritual health and strength.

§ 1. *The Principle of Sacraments.*

The great principle, therefore, on which the system of Sacraments stands founded is the fundamental principle of Christianity itself, that THE FALL BEING A LOSS OF UNION WITH GOD, SALVATION IS THE RESTORATION OF THAT UNION. And an examination of this principle in some detail will prepare the way for an elucidation of the position which Sacraments occupy in the Divine system of God's spiritual provision for mankind.

At the outset, then, we are met by the great primary truth with which the spiritual history of our race begins, that man was created in the

an invisible grace," he was only adopting an idea handed down at least from the time of St. Augustine, who had said "a Sacrament is a sign of a sacred thing." (City of God, x. 5.) Neither the primitive nor the theological sense of the word expresses the whole of what it is applied to.

image of God: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. . . . So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him." Whatever else this means, there can be no doubt it means that the moral nature of man was a reflection of the moral nature of God; that human righteousness, holiness, or goodness were each the image of Divine righteousness, holiness, or goodness. And although the very fact that in the image these qualities were human, while in the Original they were divine, shows that in the one it must have been a limited and progressive goodness, while in the other it was unlimited and perfect; yet the circumstances of man's creation show also that the Original and the image were most closely associated. For while the outward part of man was formed from material substance already existing, the spiritual part of him was formed from God himself: "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." So that the spiritual part of human nature was constituted by an incorporation of the substance of God with its corporeal part: according to the familiar saying, "Our soul is the life of the body, but God is the

life of our soul." The breath of life breathed into the man's nostrils by the Creator—whatever the literal truth may be—was evidently a conveyance to the soulless, lifeless body, of vivifying *substance*, not only of vivifying *force;* and that substance, invisible, immaterial, was derived from the invisible and immaterial Original of all life, God himself.

Thus the very constitution of human nature, as the nature of a spiritual as well as of a corporeal being, involved a substantial union with God. The germ of a holiness to which thought can apply no limit was sown in our being with the first germ of life; and the start-point of man's spiritual nature was placed on an elevation which brought it almost to the gates of heaven.

Very significant, then, is the conventional expression, "The *Fall* of man;" for it comprehensively indicates the removal of man's spiritual start-point to a much lower level, from which only a corresponding removal in the opposite direction could raise it up to its original place. But it is even more significant than this, for it indicates an actual *degeneration* in the nature of the "fallen" being.

The great champion of Israel in the period of

the Judges was a living parable. For as the fall of Samson was not only a moral fall but a loss of physical power, so that of the first parents of mankind was a loss of spiritual strength, a dragging down of human nature to so low a level that the pen of an inspired prophet could write, "Man is like a thing of nought: he may be compared unto the beasts that perish." Not, indeed, that the actual level to which man had fallen was literally so low as that of inferior animals; but that the degeneration was so great as to be capable of being thus expressed by comparison with his original elevation. Such a "Fall of Man" necessarily involves the loss of that which had placed him and kept him in the position originally assigned to him by his Creator. That which had originally *placed* him there, was the incorporation of the spirit or spiritual substance or "breath" of God with the previously created corporeal substance; that which had *kept* him there was (it may be reverently assumed) that which is designated "the Tree of Life," to which he was no longer permitted to "put forth his hand," after he had eaten of the one forbidden tree, which gave the knowledge of evil as well as good. Thus, as the Tree of Life was lost to fallen human nature,

so also was the image of God—to how great an extent we may not venture an estimate—erased from it; and that which had constituted the Divine image in human nature was, to the same extent, expelled by man's own voluntary act of disobedience.

Broadly stated, then, and without those qualifications which a more elaborate argument would involve, the Fall of man, or the spiritual degeneracy of human nature, is to be considered as THE LOSS OF PERSONAL UNION WITH GOD. The expulsion from Paradise corresponded with an expulsion from a sphere of natural being in which something of Divine nature was conjoined with that which was human.

The Incarnation of God the Son restored in His one Person this union of the Divine and the human natures. Hence St. Paul, when speaking of the Incarnation and its results, at once gives to the Incarnate God the name of Adam, as indicating the relation between the Fall and the Incarnation: "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. . . . The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second Man is the Lord from heaven."[1] What

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 45, 47.

was lost from the person of the first Adam, the "man of earth," is restored (and more than restored) in the person of the last Adam, "the Lord from heaven." God had united a man to Himself at first by breathing into his nostrils the breath of life, and so adding Divine substance to human substance. He united a man to Himself a second time, "by taking of the manhood into God;" so that all the stages of life were passed through, from the time when, "by the operation of the Holy Ghost," He "was made very man of the substance of the Virgin Mary His mother," to the time when death passed upon Him, as upon all men.

Thus the Incarnation is set over against the Fall in respect to the two individual persons, Adam and Christ: but with this vast difference, that the "first man" was incorporated into personal union with God in such a manner as left room for the severance of the union, while in the "Second Man" the union became perfect and indissoluble.

But the purpose of this union between the Divine and human natures in Christ extended beyond the one individual Man in whom it was effected. Of Adam it is left unrecorded whether

or not he could have transmitted to his descendants the blessed presence of God in man with which he was endowed; but no doubt is left as to this power of transmission on the part of Christ. "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit."[1] The one possessed the quality of life, the other possessed the quality of extending life to others. Adam lived, as a spiritual being: Christ so lived, and was also a Life-Giver. He who restored in His own individual person the union between God and man, so restored it as that the union might be established in other persons, even when "the Man Christ Jesus" himself had ascended up to heaven.

For this is the office and work of Sacraments: to extend the Incarnation from the actual to the mystical body of Christ; to unite individual persons with our Lord Jesus Christ, and by thus uniting them to restore to them union with God. Not as friend is united to friend, by bonds of feeling, mental sympathy or affection; but by

[1] There is a distinction between ψυχή and πνεῦμα, the "living *soul*," and the "life-giving *spirit*," which is left unnoticed for the sake of brevity and clearness. It is enough to say that this distinction is connected with the tripartite constitution of man, as "body, soul, and spirit."

actual incorporation of spiritual substance, such as is expressed by our Lord himself when He said to the Apostles, "I am the Vine, ye are the branches;"[1] and by St. Paul, when he writes of this "great mystery, concerning Christ and His Church," that "we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones."[2]

Hence our Lord's constant reference to His Person, not alone to His acts or His authority, as the source of salvation. The whole tone of His teaching points to this, and by this our Lord's teaching is essentially distinguished from that of men who have put themselves forth as founders of new systems of religion. For Christ does not put himself before men as their Leader in any *ordinary* sense, as their Teacher, or their King. Far above this sense of leadership, there is the extraordinary and entirely exceptional setting forth of His person as the very source of new life. "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life."[3] "Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.... I am the door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."[4] "I am the Light of the

[1] St. John xv. 5.
[2] Eph. v. 30, 32.
[3] St. John xiv. 6.
[4] Id. x. 7, 9.

world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."[1] "I am the true Vine. . . . I am the Vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for severed from" [margin] "Me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered."[2] "I am the Resurrection, and the Life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die."[3] There are about sixty sayings of our Lord in the Gospels in which He thus draws attention to Himself more or less in the sense of those above quoted; but that which best illustrates the system and principle of Sacraments, is the very definite statement which He made respecting "the Bread of Life" in the sixth chapter of St. John. This statement was repeated by Him with a progressive force, as the forms in which He made it were one by one cavilled at by the offended listeners, until at last the force of the statement was so strong that no escape was left from a literal construction of its meaning except that of "metaphorical" inter-

[1] St. John viii. 12, and ix. 5. [2] Id. xv. 1, 5, 6.
[3] Id. xi. 25, 26.

pretation, which was ventured on only by later unbelievers. The words of our Lord will be commented upon in detail when the Holy Eucharist is under consideration: and it is sufficient for the illustration of a principle applying to Sacraments in general, to put them down in the order in which they were spoken. "My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life into the world.[1] I am the bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.[2] I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.[3] Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For My

[1] St. John vi. 32, 33. [2] Id. 35. [3] Id. 48—51.

flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever."[1]

It was from such language as this—or rather it was out of the depths of the same original Mind, to which the principle of Sacraments was a self-evident truth—that the Apostles learned to write as they did respecting union with Christ by means of Baptism. They teach their converts not only that they were brought into covenant with God by Baptism, but that they "were baptized into Jesus Christ,"[2] baptized by one Spirit "into one body,"[3] so that they have become "the body of Christ" as regards the whole Church, "and members in particular"[4] as regards each individual Christian; and that such a sacramental incorporation into Christ is so real, that those so incorporated are to be spoken of as being "partakers of the Divine nature."[5]

[1] St. John vi. 53—58.
[2] Rom. vi. 3; Gal. iii. 27.
[3] 1 Cor. xii. 13.
[4] Id. 12, 27.
[5] 2 St. Peter i. 4.

From the principles thus enunciated by our Lord and His Apostles, and by the Holy Spirit which guided the writers of the New Testament, we may also learn to estimate the full force of the prayer for union and unity which is so conspicuous among the last words of Christ's life of humiliation: "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. . . . And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. . . . That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us. . . . That they may be one, even as We are One: I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one."[1] For such words, interpreted according to the "analogy of the faith" (that is, consistently with the principles elsewhere revealed in the New Testament), show that the unity of Christians with Christ, and through Him with each other, is not only an association cemented by mutual agreement and love, but a unity which copies that subsisting between the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity,—"as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us."

Thus the doctrine of union with God through

[1] St. John xvii. 17—23.

sacramental union with Christ follows in the wake of the primary doctrine respecting our spiritual condition set forth by the Holy Spirit in the book of Genesis. Man was created in the image of God, and the union of the creature with his Creator is an image of the union between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

§ 2. *Why Sacraments are necessary to unite Man with God.*

There is a question which is often asked, and which, whether asked or not, really lies at the root of much incredulity respecting the power of Divine Grace,—Why should visible Sacraments be necessary to effect that which God could bring to pass by an invisible operation of His Almighty will? The propriety of such questions is somewhat doubtful, since they are all anticipated, in reality, by the fact that God has done what He has done out of His infinite wisdom. Hence the only thoroughly reverent inquiry is as to the fact, whether He *has* provided Sacraments as a means of union with Himself, not as to the reason *why* He should have done so. But supposing it to be asked in a not irreverent or captious spirit, it is

possible that some of these replies might satisfy the inquirer.

1. It is the plain rule of God's operations in the visible world, to work by visible means. He causes physical life to be maintained by the use of food, yet who doubts that He could cause it to be maintained quite as perfectly without food, and solely by the operation of His immediate Almightiness? Grace is to the spiritual man, then, what food is to the physical man. Life does not come to our physical being without parentage intervening between the Omnipotence of God and the creature coming into being: life is not sustained in us without the intervention of food between the sustaining providence of God and the creature sustained by Him. So His grace comes to our spiritual being, and is retained there, by the intervention of outward means, the matter and form of the Sacraments.

2. It is a law imposed upon human nature, that it reaches that which is unknown and invisible through that which is known and visible. To work out this law the Son of God became incarnate, that His human nature might be "the Way" by which men were to attain the presence of the Divine Nature, "the Truth" by which they might

reach upward to the Divine Mind, "the Life" by which they might be partakers of the Divine Life. Because the person to be sanctified was made up of body and soul, therefore the sanctifying Cause and Person took to himself a body and soul also, stooping to the visible that He might raise it up to the invisible.

3. And descending to a lower kind of illustration, we may observe, that thought is conveyed and expressed by speech, writing, or painting; that we know the mind by watching its operations through the senses, and that except for these operations we should not even be conscious of its existence in other persons than ourselves. Again, that we pass through this world to the world unseen. Again, that the visible world of nature has its teachings for the heathen, to lead them to the invisible grace of Nature's Creator.

Thus it is only in accordance with a fundamental and necessary law of our nature that visible "matter" and audible "forms" should be used as the means of conveying invisible grace; that the soul should be acted upon through the body, and by "means," and by corporeal substances. It is but a phase of that great law which St. Paul enunciated in his treatise on the Incarnation:

"Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual." [1]

§ 3. *Sacramental Ordinances before the Coming of Christ.*

There is but one way of salvation revealed to us, which is by our Lord Jesus Christ; and there is but one way to Him revealed, which is by Sacraments. If any are saved during the present dispensation without coming to Christ by Baptism, the way by which their salvation is effected has not been made known to us; though many good men have conjectured that God has "uncovenanted mercies," by which even heathens are brought within the possibility of salvation. This has always been a difficulty to some minds, but it is a difficulty on which we need not enter, since it would lead us too much into the region of mere imagination, and far away from that of revealed truth. But another similar one requires to be noticed; and that is, as to the means by which those of the old dispensation attained to salvation.

One of the wonderful features of the Incarna-

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 46.

tion and Death of our Lord was their retrospective influence. This is a characteristic which it is not easy to express by a single epithet, but it may be shortly described as the influence exercised by the Incarnation on the whole course of man's history before the time of our Lord, corresponding to that which it has exercised upon mankind in the ages that have since gone by. The saints of the Old Testament were sanctified by drinking from the same Fountain of Life which was opened in the latter days for the cleansing and healing of all mankind. By faith they looked forward into a land of promise, as Moses looked from the top of Pisgah; and though they did not see the details of its character, nor taste of its milk and honey, they beheld it lighted up by the sunlight of God's presence, and even that imperfect vision gave them rest. They, as well as we, were brought before the throne of God through the mediation of the Messiah. To them as well as to us He was the ladder between earth and heaven, by which sacrifices and prayers ascended to God, and by which mercy, and peace, and grace descended to man. The "eternal purpose" of God[1] made that which was not yet as if it were already, and accepted the

[1] Eph. iii. 11; 2 Tim. i. 9.

virtue of the Great Sacrifice even before it was accomplished, so that man should not be altogether lost for want of a Mediator, or of His saving grace.

Thus, although God had provided some better thing for the later ages of the world, that the former ages without the later might not be made perfect, there seem to have been some traces, to say the least, of Sacraments in all ages; some lingering relics of the Tree of Life which prevented the utter obliteration of God's image from man's spiritual nature. All nations recognised some ceremonial ablutions or lustrations as spiritual ordinances, and God himself conveyed blessings by means of them, as in the case of Naaman. These "divers washings" could not "make the comers thereunto perfect," nor had they the power of spiritual regeneration associated with them; yet it would be rash to say that these foreshadowings of the Water of Life were mere shadows, conveying no blessing which could not have been as well received without their intervention.

Sacrifices were also in use from the very earliest periods, as we see by the instances of Cain, Abel, and Noah. In the Mosaic system there were some sacrifices which were eaten as well as offered, as

the shew-bread, the peace-offering, and the Passover; and it is probable that these represented institutions of an analogous kind in the earlier times. Such sacrifices bear so strong a likeness, in their twofold use, to the sacrifice and communion of the Holy Eucharist, that in their case, again, we may look for something of the reality as well as the type of sacramental efficacy.

Nor can the imposition of hands, which formed so prominent a rite in the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations, be regarded otherwise than as a "means of grace," without giving to it a lower place than seems to be assigned to it in Holy Scripture. The benediction given by Jacob to the sons of Joseph shows what the patriarchal custom was, and how it was associated with prophetic inspiration.[1] The incidental notice that "Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands upon him,"[2] pointedly associates a sacramental virtue with the rite. And such an association was no doubt present in the minds of those who—doubtless carrying out an ancient custom, rather than knowing fully what they did—brought young children to Christ that He might touch them by laying His hands upon

[1] Gen. xlviii. 14. [2] Deut. xxxiv. 9.

them.[1] A similar association was in the mind of him who said to Jesus, "My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay Thy hand upon her, and she shall live;"[2] some such idea as that of Naaman when he thought that the prophet would "strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper."[3]

Thus, although we cannot venture so far as to say that ceremonial ordinances such as these were an actual means of union with God, we may reverently consider them as outlying parts of the Divine system of Sacraments upon which some dawning beams of the Sun of Righteousness were already shining, and endowing them with a measure of His healing grace. They suffice to show us that the system of Sacraments was not altogether new when it became the life of Christianity; and that in this, as in other things, our Blessed Lord was building His new dispensation upon foundations which He had already laid in His old dispensation.

[1] St. Matt. xix. 13. [2] Id. ix. 18.
[3] 2 Kings v. 11.

§ 4. *The Sacraments provided for Christians.*

The question now arises, What are the particular Sacraments provided by this Divine system for establishing and promoting union between God and man?

In Holy Scripture, and in the early Christian writers, the word 'sacrament,' or 'mystery,' is used in a general sense,[1] and there does not seem to have been any term in use during the first ages by which to designate comprehensively the ordinances of the Holy Eucharist, Baptism, Confirmation, &c. But theological writers of later times have been accustomed to reckon the Sacraments as seven—viz. Baptism, Confirmation, the Holy Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony. This enumeration is arbitrary, and no theologians allege that the seven thus named are equal in dignity or equally necessary for Christians. By some it has been denied that all seven are properly to be called Sacraments, while others allege that the word may be properly used in an inferior sense for those of the seven which are not of the highest dignity and most

[1] See Note on page 1.

general necessity; and also for other ordinances of a sacramental nature. The number seven has, however, been given to the Sacraments by the Eastern and Western Churches in general for many centuries, and has been recognised by the Church of England in the Twenty-fifth Article of Religion, and the Homily of Common Prayer and Sacraments; the latter of which contains the following remarks:—

"As for the number of them, if they should be considered according to the exact signification of a Sacrament, namely, for visible signs expressly commanded in the New Testament, whereunto is annexed the promise of free forgiveness, and of our holiness and joining in Christ, there be but two, namely, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord. . . . But in a general acceptation the name of a Sacrament may be attributed to anything whereby an holy thing is signified. In which understanding of the word, the ancient writers have given this name, not only to the other five commonly of late years taken and used for supplying the number of the Sacraments, but also to divers and sundry other ceremonies, as to oil, washing of feet, and such like; not meaning thereby to repute them as Sacraments in the same signification that

the two fore-named Sacraments are. And although there are retained by the order of the Church of England, besides these two, certain other rites and ceremonies about the institution of ministers in the Church, Matrimony, Confirmation of children and likewise for the Visitation of the Sick; yet no man ought to take these for Sacraments, in such signification and meaning as the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper are: but either for godly states of life, necessary in Christ's Church, and therefore worthy to be set forth by public action and solemnity by the ministry of the Church; or else judged to be such ordinances as may make for the instruction, comfort, and edification of Christ's Church."

The statement of the Twenty-fifth Article is that "there are two Sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the Gospel, that is to say, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord.

"Those five commonly called Sacraments, that is to say, Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony, and Extreme Unction, are not to be counted for Sacraments of the Gospel, being such as have grown partly of the corrupt following of the Apostles, partly are states of life allowed in the Scriptures; but yet have not like nature of

Sacraments with Baptism and the Lord's Supper, for that they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God."

This venerable and long-recognised enumeration of "Seven" Sacraments offers a convenient classification in some respects; but it has the inconvenience (1) of appearing to place all on the same footing, and (2) of classing under one common name seven ordinances which cannot all be brought under one common definition. The received definition of a Sacrament is gathered out of the works of St. Augustine, and was put into exact form by Peter Lombard, called the Master of the Sentences, in the twelfth century. It is in the well-known words, that "a Sacrament is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace;" to which the Church of England has added in the Catechism, "ordained by Christ himself," with the further addition that it was ordained "as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof." This definition of the English Church is an attempt to provide a term which shall properly distinguish the two Sacraments of Baptism and the Holy Eucharist; but, like others, it reminds us that all language is insufficient fully and exhaustively to express

Divine mysteries; and that while definitions are necessary, they can never be otherwise than incomplete.

And thus, in inquiring what Sacraments are provided for Christians, we must fall back on our Lord's words in respect to the two which claim that name in the highest possible sense, the Sacraments of Baptism and of the Holy Eucharist. Respecting the first, He has used words which show that it is provided as the very gate of salvation: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."[1] "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."[2] Respecting the other, He has said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him."[3] Such statements made by the Lord himself leave no doubt as to the primary importance which these

[1] St. John iii. 5. [2] St. Mark xvi. 16.
[3] St. John vi. 53—57.

two Sacraments occupy in the Divine system of salvation, showing that they are operative as regards both the present and the future life of every Christian, and that their object is to establish and build him up in union with God.

Hence the Church of England instructs children and others in the Catechism, that these two Sacraments "are generally," that is, universally,[1] "necessary to salvation;" and (though here again the definition is incomplete, since the Holy Eucharist is not necessary to the salvation of baptized children dying in early infancy, yet) this shows the reverent submission with which our Lord's words are to be received, and how dangerous the neglect of either of these two Sacraments must be. They are the two by which union with Christ is originated and maintained; without the one of which no person can become a Christian, without the other of which no adult Christian can be in close communion with God, or in a safe state of grace. They are, therefore, necessary for all persons, in every condition of life, and there is no one who can say that Baptism and the Holy Eucharist

[1] This was the only sense in which the word was used by writers of the period. See "Annotated Book of Common Prayer," p. 249.

are not necessary to his own salvation without contradicting God.

But all sacramental ordinances, whether Sacraments in this highest sense or not, are intended to impart grace to the persons receiving them. Hence the laying on of a Bishop's hands for Confirmation conveys grace for the establishment of the confirmed Christian in the state of salvation to which he was brought by Baptism. Absolution conveys grace to the penitent for the pardon of past sins, and the loosing of the soul from their bondage and power. The anointing of the dying conveys grace to their souls to strengthen them in the last weakness of their bodies. The laying on of Episcopal hands in Holy Orders conveys grace to those who are made deacons, priests, or bishops, that the work done by them in the name of Christ may have efficacious power as His work. The solemn benediction of man and woman in Holy Matrimony conveys grace to them, that they may live together without sin, and that they may bring children into the world to be added to the family of God. And thus these sacramental ordinances are also means of grace to those who receive them; and some are so far necessary that, for example, marriage cannot be Holy Matrimony without the

benediction of a priest, nor ministers the ministers of sacramental grace to others without the laying on of hands of a Bishop.

§ 5. *Summary.*

This exposition of the nature of Sacraments in general may be summed up in a few words, by saying that they are a divinely ordained form of external substances and ceremonies by means of which the work of salvation is being continually carried on. They are not additions to the work of Christ, but part of that work. He died to save men: He lives to save them. He died to make their salvation possible: He lives to make it actual. From the time of His conception to that of His session in heaven, He was perfecting Himself to become the Author of our salvation in His own Person; since the time when He sat down at the right hand of God, He has been co-operating with the Holy Spirit to bring men into union with that Person, that His work might be perfected in them.

The virtue of Sacraments is therefore entirely derived from God. He ordained their administration by the hands of men, and consequently by

the hands of sinners; but the sinfulness of the administrator cannot frustrate the work of God: and whenever they are administered rightly as to their external part and form, the inward grace of them is given by God, unless an obstacle to His grace is interposed by the sin of the person receiving the outward part, or submitting to the outward form. Hence Sacraments bring men into the closest approach to God that is possible while they are in this life; near to His power, near to His Person. They are, indeed, the steps of that ladder which Jacob saw in prophetic vision, and Christ revealed in reality: "Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

CHAPTER I.

HOLY BAPTISM.

THE first Sacrament of the Christian system formed the subject of our Lord's last commandment to His Apostles, when just before His ascension He commissioned them to go and make disciples of all nations, "baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."[1] This was the first time, so far as appears from Holy Scripture, that the name of the Holy Trinity was associated with the rite of Baptism; but a ceremonial use of water under the same designation had been familiar to the Apostles for about four years, since John the Baptist had "baptized" multitudes in the river Jordan,[2] and the disciples of our Lord themselves baptized others in the early days of His ministry.[3] It is supposed, indeed, by some divines,

[1] St. Matt. xxviii. 19. [2] Id. iii. 6.
[3] St. John iii. 22; iv. 1, 2.

that since the Jews baptized proselytes after their circumcision in the age which followed that of the Apostles, they had been accustomed to do so before the time of our Lord; but this supposition is not supported by any direct evidence, neither the Old Testament, nor Jewish writers previous to the early ages of Christianity, making any mention of such a rite.[1]

§ 1. *The Use of Water in the Divine System of Salvation prefigured.*

All previous ages had, however, associated water with notions of ceremonial purification; and an inward spiritual purification had been frequently spoken of as "washing" by the prophets of the old dispensation. Ceremonial bathing before sacrificing was practised by the heathen nations; and the washing of clothes, as well as person, was strictly enjoined by the Mosaic law on many occasions. Such customs and injunctions seem to point to an even earlier use of water for a religious

[1] It is first noticed in the Targum of Jonathan; where the sense of Exod. xii. 44 is given as "Thou shalt circumcise him, and baptize him." But the Targum of Jonathan is of much later date than any part of the New Testament. Josephus is quite silent on the subject.

purpose, and the language of Jacob to his family as they approached Bethel, "Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments,"[1] may be reasonably interpreted as confirming this idea. The cleansing of Naaman, when, according to Elisha's direction, "he went down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan,"[2] must also be regarded as a Divine indication of the sacramental use to which water was to be applied; for leprosy was specially regarded as a type of sin, and as it could only be cured by supernatural means, water was, in this case, the outward sign of God's work in effecting the cure.

But it is the *habit*, so to speak, of Holy Scripture, to prefigure Christ, His dispensations, and His ordinances, by mystical language, and by the record of acts or events, which (as the cleansing of Naaman) have an evident mystical or typical reference to them. Hence in some of His latest utterances the Holy Spirit fixes a mystical sense upon some of His earliest: St. Peter being inspired to associate the idea of the Baptismal cleansing of mankind with the Diluvial cleansing of the earth, and salvation by Baptism with the salvation of

[1] Gen. xxxv. 2. [2] 2 Kings v. 14.

Noah and his family in the ark.[1] This habit of Holy Scripture may lead us to look for prophetic foreshadowings of the Sacraments throughout the Old Testament, and to find them prefigured *in the language of God*, though we should have no reason to look for any reference to them in those old records if they were only the language of man. For with Him who speaks in the Holy Bible, "one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day," and the age of Creation is contemporaneous with the age of Regeneration in the mind of Him to whom all things are one continuous present.

§ 2. *Water prefigured as a Fountain of Spiritual Life.*

Thus, then, we may observe a type of Baptism in the drawing forth of a living world from an ocean of waters. "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters,"[2] hovering or brooding over them (as the words mean), in the manner in which He afterwards "descended in a bodily shape, like a dove,"[3] upon our Lord at His baptism in the waters of Jordan. Under the shadow of His

[1] 1 St. Peter iii. 21. [2] Gen. i. 2. [3] St. Luke iii. 22.

wings the primeval waters were endowed with a life-giving power, so that they first brought forth the earth itself, and afterwards, "abundantly, the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven."[1] Thus, in the first page of Holy Scripture, the Sacrament of Baptism is mystically prefigured by the association of the element of water with the creative operation of "the Holy Ghost, the Lord, and Giver of Life."

The same Divine Mind has also revealed the idea of "living waters" with a mystical sense in several of the prophecies. So Solomon sang of the Spouse of Christ as "a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon."[2] So Joel prophesied of the Lord's dispensation, that "a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord;"[3] Ezekiel, that there should be rivers proceeding from the house of God which "whithersoever they shall come" shall cause everything that moveth to live, "and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and everything shall live whither the river cometh."[4] So again,

[1] Gen. i. 20.
[2] Cant. iv. 15.
[3] Joel iii. 18.
[4] Ezek. xlvii. 9.

Zechariah, that "in that day living waters shall go out from Jerusalem."[1]

Once more turning back to the first pages of Holy Scripture, we find a "river" going out of the garden wherein was the "tree of life;"[2] and on its last page we find in the regenerated Paradise "a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."[3] As, therefore, the Creator reveals Himself to us, "laying the beams of His chambers in the waters,"[4] so also He teaches us by words of prophecy from the beginning that "there is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High."[5]

This Divine idea of "living waters" is also associated by the Mind which originated it with the Divine Person. St. Paul was inspired to write respecting the waters which flowed forth from the rock at Horeb to give life to the fainting Israelites,[6]

[1] Zech. xiv. 8.
[2] Gen. ii. 9, 10.
[3] Rev. xxii. 1, 2.
[4] Ps. civ. 3.
[5] Ps. xlvi. 4.
[6] Exod. xvii. 6.

that they "did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ."[1] But many ages before God had spoken of Himself as "the Fountain of living water;"[2] and as David had sung, "With thee is the fountain of life;"[3] as Isaiah had cried, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the water;"[4] so Christ himself spoke of the "living water" which He would give:[5] "In the last day, that great day of the feast, He stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink;"[6] and on a still greater day gave witness to the sacramental meaning of His words when "one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water."[7]

§ 3. *Water prefigured as a Fountain of Spiritual Cleansing.*

But as the vivifying power of water is not its only property, so the sacramental virtue of the element was prefigured of old in another way, its

[1] 1 Cor. x. 4.
[2] Jer. ii. 13; xvii. 13.
[3] Ps. xxxvi. 9.
[4] Isa. lv. 1.
[5] St. John iv. 10, 14.
[6] Id. vii. 37.
[7] Id. xix. 34.

cleansing as well as its invigorating power being mystically represented in the language spoken by the acts, works, and words of God.

So are we to interpret the spiritual meaning of that flood of waters which was poured forth upon the old world to wash away the defilement which had been brought upon it by the antediluvian generations of mankind. The primitive Church was deeply sensible of this mystical view of the Deluge, as may be seen from the writings of the Fathers, and more clearly still from the words of a prayer used in the earliest known baptismal office. In this, which is handed down to us from the fifth century, and probably belongs to the Apostolic age, there are the following words: "Thou Who washing away the sins of the world by water, didst, in the very outpourings of the Deluge, stamp a figure of regeneration; so that through the mystery of one and the same element, there was both an end put to sins, and a source of excellence."[1] The same idea was illustrated by the prayer from which the first collect in our Baptismal Office was formed, in which is a supplication "that whatsoever filth he hath taken of Adam, it may be drowned, and be put away in this holy flood,

[1] From the Sacramentary of Gelasius, A.D. 492.

that being separated from the number of the ungodly, he may be kept safe in the ark of thy holy Church."[1] Many such passages from old Christian writings and devotions could be quoted to show that deep Christian thinkers have always looked upon the immersion of the earth in a deluge as a purification, and not only a destruction. And as things are purified both by the action of water and by the action of fire, so it has been considered that the world having been already cleansed by the one at the time of the Deluge, it will be refined by the other at the consummation of all things.

The same idea of a general cleansing by water was associated with the entrance of the Chosen People into their inheritance of the promised land. Those who came out of Egypt passed through the Red Sea, and when that generation had all died without attaining the promised land, their successors passed through the river Jordan. The narrative of these two great events might lead us to think, if it stood by itself, that though God wrought miracles on behalf of His people in both cases, yet the passage through the sea and the

[1] Luther's, or a more ancient German form. See Annotated Book of Common Prayer, p. 218.

river were simply necessities arising out of the geographical structure of the route they had to go. But St. Paul, inspired by the Holy Ghost, teaches us to look further and deeper; and to observe not merely the literal sense of the record, which only extends to the fact, that "all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea," but also the mystical sense, which extends to the spiritual meaning of their transit, that they "were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea."[1] Thus, as the physical world itself entered on its new phase of existence after a baptism by the Deluge, so the specially Chosen People of God entered on their existence as a separated and holy nation, after a baptism which washed away first the defiling marks of their bondage in Egypt, and secondly, those subsequently acquired by their rebellion and idolatry in the wilderness.

These great general types of sacramental cleansing by water were followed by a continuous class of religious customs, which look in the same direction, and were of a personal or individual character. Such were the patriarchal ablutions already indicated in a previous page; such also the washing of Naaman in Jordan; and, above all,

[1] 1 Cor. x. 1, 2.

such were the many ceremonial ablutions of the Mosaic law, which were often unnecessary for mere physical cleanliness, and wholly without meaning, unless they typified a spiritual cleansing. But the idea of purification of the soul is so often associated with the idea of washing in the Old Testament, that to suppose these acts of ablution destitute of typical or spiritual meaning would be quite inconsistent with an intelligent survey of the sacred writings. To all such ablutions, doubtless, the words used in one particular case apply, "It is a purification for sin."[1]

And when, in the opening of Isaiah's prophecy, he sets forth in terrible plainness the iniquities of Israel, his exhortation to repentance (or rather the "word of the Lord" so exhorting), begins with this very form of expression: "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well." And the effect of such "washing" and "making clean" is immediately stated in the words, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."[2]

[1] Numb. xix. 9. [2] Isa. i. 16—18.

This Divine language is brought nearer still to the New Dispensation by such words as those of Jeremiah: "O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved;"[1] for one is reminded immediately of what preceded the ministrations of the Saviour, when there went out to John the Baptist "Jerusalem, and all Judæa, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins."[2] Nearer still, when God predicts of that new dispensation, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you."[3] "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness."[4]

[1] Jer. iv. 14.
[2] St. Matt. iii. 5.
[3] Ezek. xxxvi. 25.
[4] Zech. xiii. 1.

§ 4. *The Institution of Baptism by our Lord.*

Thus, here and there in the successive ages of the world, the language of heaven had been so spoken on earth as partly to reveal the fact that the element of water was to hold an important place in the Divine system of salvation which was to be built up by Christ in the new dispensation. But such prophetic indications began to be seen in a clearer light when the forerunner of our Lord appeared to preach and administer the Baptism of Repentance as a preparation for the Baptism of Regeneration.

The ministry of St. John the Baptist was a startling warning that an altogether new era was beginning. He appeared in the guise of the prophets of old, but his custom of "baptizing" those who repented of their sins was one not previously used by the prophets, and was probably a new custom altogether; for there is no historical evidence to show that it was ever adopted before. The rite was one, however, which at once commended itself to the religious instinct of the Jews, and by its distinctive character fixed a name and an idea in their minds with reference to the prophet who was introducing this new phase of

their old religion. He soon became designated as John "the Baptist," and his system was so associated with the rite of Baptism that it is more than likely it was called simply by that name, or by the word "baptizing;" the special characteristic suggesting a special designation.

The religion of the Gospel being thus initiated by St. John as a religion beginning with Baptism, our Blessed Lord associated the rite with His own person so soon as ever the time had arrived for the manifestation of Himself as the Saviour. It was "when Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age,"[1] that He too "cometh from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him."[2] Then for the first time was made an open revelation of that Holy Trinity in whose name all were to be baptized in the New Dispensation, the revelation having been made less clearly, and to a few only, when the "Son of God" was "conceived by the Holy Ghost" at the beginning of the Incarnation. For "Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him: and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is

[1] St. Luke iii. 23. [2] St. Matt. iii. 13.

My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."[1] Such an "opening of the heavens," revealing the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity, seems to connect our Lord's own baptism very distinctly with His commission respecting Baptism in general, for in the record of what passed during the interval of more than three years which occurred between these two events, there is no further such distinct reference to the Trinity. Our Lord's baptism is therefore to be regarded in another light than as a personal act, by which He made Himself like to those of His brethren who had received the Baptism of Repentance. It must be looked upon as the actual institution of a new rite, a baptism especially associated with His human nature, and in which all the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity co-operated with the human minister and the outward ceremony.

By the baptism of Christ, therefore, Christian Baptism was once and for ever instituted; and we plead in no vain words before the throne of His Majesty when we pray in the obsecrations of the Litany, "By thy Baptism, good Lord, deliver us." For His baptism was the act in which He consecrated to a spiritual use in a new, real, and effec-

[1] St. Matt. iii. 16.

tive sense, that element of water which had so long been used under a typical foreshadowing of the power with which God would endow it. Hence every ancient Baptismal Office contains words of prayer equivalent to those in our own, in which we solemnly address our heavenly Father, "Almighty and everlasting God, who . . . by the baptism of thy well-beloved Son Jesus Christ, in the river Jordan, didst sanctify water to the mystical washing away of sin."[1] And not only was the element of water so sanctified, but there was also revealed a special association between the rite of Baptism, the human nature of our Lord, and the Divine Personality of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Whether this institution of the Sacrament of Holy Baptism was effective before the Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of our Lord—*i. e.* whether the rite used by the Apostles[2] was *Christian* Baptism—it is not necessary here to inquire; and it need only be offered as a probable conjecture, that during our Lord's lifetime the Apostles

[1] In the Office for the Baptism of Adults, the latter words are, "Who didst sanctify *the element of water* to the mystical washing away of sin:" thus expressing the doctrine still more plainly.

[2] St. John iv. 2.

continued to administer the Baptism of Repentance as a preparation for His visible presence, and *not* the Baptism of Regeneration, which was to effect His spiritual presence. But however this may be, there is no room for any doubt whatever to hover about the terse and perspicuous words in which our Lord gave His final commission to the Apostles.

The form of this commission is recorded thus by St. Matthew, with the preface in which our Lord stated His own. "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."[1] St. Mark also records a similar commission, given perhaps on another of His visits to the Apostles before the Ascension: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."[2]

But although the *commission* to administer Christian Baptism was thus given by our Lord before His Ascension, the *power* to administer it appears not to have been given before the day of

[1] St. Matt. xxviii. 18, margin. [2] St. Mark xvi. 15.

Pentecost. For some more of His last words are recorded in the Acts, in which He bids them "wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith He, ye have heard of Me." And he added, "For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence:" and, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."[1] Connecting these words with the facts of the day of Pentecost, it will be apparent that the ability to administer the outward sign of Baptism so that it should be endowed with the inward grace, was conferred in that "baptism with the Holy Ghost," by which the power given to our Lord was handed down to the Apostles according to His promise. For as soon as the Holy Ghost had come upon the Twelve they went forth into the streets of Jerusalem "preaching Jesus and the Resurrection;" and when this preaching had brought the multitude to penitent thoughts of what they had done to "that same Jesus" some fifty days before, so that they asked "What shall we do?" St. Peter replied at once in language according with our Lord's commission, "Repent, and be baptized." And, by the Sacrament of Christian Baptism, instituted three years

[1] Acts i. 5, 8.

and a half before in the person of Christ himself, "The same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."[1]

Thus again "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" to endow them with life; and thus did "God, my King of old," work "salvation in the midst of the earth," and break "the head of" that "dragon" who had "bruised the heel" of the Saviour, by breaking his power "in the waters" of Baptism.[2] As the world was created with a baptism of the primeval ocean, and regenerated by the cleansing flood of the Deluge, so did the new world of Christianity come forth from the stream of Jordan to be regenerated out of the "fountain opened for all uncleanness" in the sacramental waters of Holy Baptism.

Henceforth they to whose vision "a door was opened in heaven," beheld "before the throne a sea of glass like unto crystal: . . . a sea of glass mingled with fire,"—the water of Baptism vivified by the power of the Holy Ghost: "and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the

[1] Acts ii. 37—41. [2] Ps. lxxiv. 12, 13.

song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb,"—of the Old Dispensation and the New,—"saying, Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints."[1]

§ 5. *The Mode of administering Holy Baptism.*[2]

The name of the Sacrament, its institution in the person of our Lord, and the commission given to the Apostles for its administration, combine

[1] Rev. iv. 6; xv. 2, 3.

[2] "The ecclesiastical word Βάπτισμα, from which our familiar English word is derived, always associates itself with the idea of purification, although such an association of ideas was not necessarily connected with the classical βαπτίζω, βάπτω, from which it is formed. On the other hand, although the original classical word has the primary sense of dipping, (that is, of more or less immersion in some fluid,) this sense is not necessarily connected with the ecclesiastical word. It is used in the New Testament with several applications; as, for example, to the baptism of the Jews by St. John the Baptist (John i. 26); to ceremonial washings of the person and of vessels used for eating and drinking (Mark vii. 4; Heb. ix. 10); to the ministry of our Lord (Matt. iii. 11); to the Passion of our Lord (Luke xii. 50; Mark x. 38); to the operation of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles (Acts i. 5); and lastly, in its most customary sense, to the rite of Holy Baptism instituted by Christ (Matt. xxviii. 19; Acts viii. 36; Eph. iv. 5; 1 Pet. iii. 21). In all these applications of the word, the idea of purification is plainly latent, even when it is so metaphorically used as in the case of our Lord's words, 'I have a baptism to be baptized with;' for although He had no sin from which He could be purified,

together to indicate the leading principles on which the manner of its administration must be founded, that it was to be a washing with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The application of the element to the person, and the actual words of invocation, have therefore always been considered as absolutely essential parts of Christian Baptism; the water being called the "matter" (or material), the invocation being called the "form" of the Sacrament. As to these the whole Church has always been at one, except that in the necessary prefix to our Lord's words the Eastern Church does not mention the baptizer, but says, "The servant of God, N. is baptized in the Name," &c.; while the Western Church uses the form, "I baptize thee in the Name," &c.

The Eastern prefix was introduced at a very early period to obviate misconstructions like that indicated by St. Paul, "Every one of you saith, I

yet was He 'made sin for us,' and also 'made perfect through sufferings' (Heb. ii. 10). It is moreover observable, that after the institution of the rite of Christian Baptism by our Lord, the word is not any longer used in other senses in Holy Scripture, (except historically,) but is restricted to the one which it has commonly held in all subsequent ages."—*The Annotated Book of Common Prayer*, p. 208.

am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ;"[1] but the subsequent words (as well as in the Western form) are the exact words of our Lord; and either prefix is considered orthodox by the theologians of both East and West.

On the day of Pentecost, when so vast a number were to be baptized, there can be no doubt that the simply essential mode of administering the Sacrament would be used. It is by no means impossible that the twelve Apostles should have baptized each individual person, by going down with them into a running stream, as St. John the Baptist had done; since the words and the act would occupy but a few seconds in each particular case. But some learned divines have thought there is reason to believe aspersion was used on this occasion, supposing that St. Peter alone baptized.[2] A short time afterwards Philip the deacon baptized the eunuch by going down with him into the water; and the circumstance is mentioned in an emphatic way, "they went down both into

[1] 1 Cor. i. 12. This error attributed the efficacy of the Sacrament to the minister; at least in post-Apostolic times.

[2] "Vel aspersione, quemadmodum a Petro factum esse colligitur, cum uno die tria millia hominum ad fidei veritatem traduxit et baptizavit."—*Catech. Trident.* II. cap. ii. § 17.

the water, both Philip and the eunuch,"[1] as if there was some special reason for showing either that immersion was the Apostolic practice, or that the minister of Baptism must be close to the person baptized, for the purpose of pouring the water upon him, and that it was not sufficient for the eunuch to be in the water while Philip spoke the words at a distance. Yet there were cases, even in Apostolic times, when immersion could hardly have been used, as, for example, that of the Philippian gaoler and his household, whom St. Paul baptized in prison, or rather in the gaoler's house.[2]

There can be no question that baptism by immersion was the ordinary method in the early Church: and that this continued to be the practice for many ages in Eastern countries, and the warm climate of Southern Europe; where separate buildings were often erected as "baptisteries," with a pool of water to which there was a descent of seven steps. And while the original custom continued, the descent of the person to be baptized into the water, and his

[1] Acts viii. 38.

[2] Id. xvi. 33. It must, however, be remembered that bath-rooms were common in Roman and Grecian houses at that time.

ascent after Baptism, gave a point to Apostolic teaching which is not so clearly brought out by the later custom. "We are buried with Him by baptism into death," says St. Paul, "that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."[1] But the scanty records of early Christianity among the nations of colder climates, do not give evidence to the same effect: affusion was certainly practised in England before A.D. 816,[2] and small fonts still exist in our churches, as much as from eight hundred to a thousand years old, which are not more than large enough for the immersion of infants.

It is also certain that many persons were baptized on their death-beds (when immersion would be impossible) in the ages immediately succeeding that of the Apostles.

The exact state of the case seems to be, that on public occasions, and when a stream or other large body of water was within reach, the Apostles and their early successors baptized by immersing the person, to a greater or less extent, and pouring

[1] Rom. vi. 4.

[2] Immersion being ordered instead by the Council of Chelsea, held in that year.

water upon his head during the utterance of the ordained words; but that there were also occasions when persons were baptized without immersion. Hence the conclusion is to be drawn that there are circumstances which make it justifiable to apply the water in other ways than by immersion of the person; and that Baptism so administered is equally valid with that given by the original method.

The coldness of northern climates, and the diminished hardiness of modes of life, are to be taken as amply justifying such a change; and the general custom of the English and other Western Churches has long been that of "affusion" by pouring water upon the head once, on beginning the words of the form, or thrice, *i. e.* at the utterance of the name of each Person in the Holy Trinity.[1]

As the Jewish system gradually broke up during the generation which succeeded that of which the elder Apostles formed part, the Christian system was gradually developed as one which

[1] The rubric of our English Office enjoins the priest to "pour water upon" the child if those who bring it to the font "certify that it is weak." This certification is sufficiently implied by the child being brought in clothing which does not admit of ready immersion.

could stand independently of the ancient religion of the Temple; and with this development of Christian independence there necessarily arose a development of Christian ritual to supersede the Jewish, and to gather around the system of Sacraments instead of around that of animal Sacrifices. Hence an elaborate ritual soon associated itself with the fundamental principles which regulated the administration of Baptism, the character of which we may judge from the liturgical fragments relating to it which are embalmed in the writings of successive centuries, and from actual descriptions of the rite itself as it was administered in the primitive Church. How far the details of this ritual owe their origin to Apostolic authority it is impossible to say, but some of them are mentioned by the Fathers of the second and third centuries as if they had been long in use, and were well known to all Christians; and there is no reference to them whatever which would lead to the inference that they had been recently introduced.[1]

From Tertullian (A.D. 150–220), St. Cyprian (A.D.

[1] Tertullian indeed, in the second century, speaks of one at least of such customs as handed down by tradition, and confirmed by custom, though not mentioned in Scripture. (De Coron. c. iii.)

200–258), and St. Cyril of Jerusalem (A.D. 315–386), we are able to gather full particulars of these customs, as observed in the post-Apostolic ages; and in the Sacramentaries of Gelasius (A.D. 492) and of Gregory (A.D. 590) we have the ritual itself set forth, including many rubrical directions. From these authentic sources of information respecting the primitive Church, we learn that the water to be used for Baptism was blessed or consecrated with much ceremony, oil that had previously received the benediction of the bishop being poured upon the water in the form of a cross. The persons to be baptized then answered, themselves or (if infants) by their sponsors, to certain interrogatories, the replies to which constituted a vow of renunciation and a profession of faith, such as still remain in use by the Church. They were then baptized by trine immersion (being previously anointed all over with oil, in very early times), and, on coming up from the font, white garments were given to them, they were anointed and signed with the cross, they received the kiss of peace, and a small quantity of milk and honey was given to them as a symbol of their entrance into the promised land of Christ's kingdom. At some time before Baptism, they had been catechised, and had

gone through the ceremony of exorcism; and immediately, or very soon after Baptism (if the bishop was not then present), they were confirmed and received the Holy Eucharist, whether infants or adults. The following table will show how early these usages are mentioned by Christian writers, and they are mentioned so much as a matter of course, as to show that they were long established:—

§ 6. *Ceremonies used at Baptism in the Primitive Church.*

CEREMONY.	BY WHOM MENTIONED.		
	A.D. 150—220.	A.D. 200—258.	A.D. 315—386.
Exorcism	...	St. Cyprian.	St. Cyril of Jerusalem.
Unction before Baptism .	Tertullian.		
Benediction of water . .	Do.	Do.	Do.
Renunciation of Satan . .	Do.	Do.	Do.
Profession of Faith . . .	Do.	Do.	Do.
Trine Immersion	Do.	...	Do.
White garments	...	...	Do.
Honey and milk	Do.		
Unction after Baptism . .	...	...	Do.
Kiss of peace	...	Do.	
Sign of Cross	Do.	Do.	
Use of Sponsors	Do.		

In mediæval times, the ceremonies used at Baptism were a development of those used in the

primitive Church; but there was no departure from the primitive principles. At the reformation of the Church of England Offices in 1549, some changes were made, and some more in 1552; but the unction after Baptism and the delivery of the white robe (dropped in 1552) were the only ceremonies of the primitive Church then in use which were not enjoined in the Book of Common Prayer. Thus it will be seen that the mode in which Baptism is administered by the modern Church is substantially that which was used in the times immediately succeeding the age of the Apostles; and there is more reason for agreeing with the belief of the primitive Church, that the chief ceremonies used were enjoined by the Apostles, than for agreeing with those who differ from the primitive Church in this opinion, but have no reason to give for their dissent, except the absence of such ceremonies from the page of Holy Scripture.

§ 7. *Persons qualified to baptize.*

Our Blessed Lord being the fountain-head of all supernatural grace,—according to His words, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth,"—gave ministerial authority and ability to the

Apostles, by which they were commissioned to baptize, and "enabled"[1] by this means to convey grace in earthly channels from the Divine Fountain in heaven. Thus they were the primary channels of communication between the Divine Fountain of grace and those who were to drink thereof. As soon as the work of the ministry became too extensive to be carried on by twelve men only, the Apostles ordained others to take part of that work off their hands; and, in the first place, separated off the lower functions of their office, and appointed deacons to exercise them in their stead.[2] Very shortly after this had been done, one of these deacons is found baptizing converts;[3] and from this it is plain that the administration of this essential Sacrament was assigned to the inferior ministers of the Church by the Apostles, as soon as ever they began to be appointed. As, however, the Apostolic office was the supreme visible source of spiritual authority, so, on the death of the Apostles, their ordinary powers were vested in their successors, the bishops of the Church; and hence bishops alone were considered as having an

[1] See St. Paul's use of the word in 1 Tim. i. 12, as signifying the general spiritual ability belonging to his ministerial office.

[2] Acts vi. 5. [3] Id. viii. 12, 38.

original authority to baptize, priests and deacons baptizing as their deputies. So St. Ignatius, who lived partly in the time of the Apostles, says that it is not lawful to baptize without the bishop;[1] and Baptism was ordinarily administered only at set times, such as Easter Eve and Pentecost, by, or in the presence of, the bishop.

This appears to have been nothing more than a matter of discipline; for it was soon decided that the form and matter of the Sacrament were the essential characteristics of it. This decision was arrived at first in the case of baptisms by heretics. St. Cyprian had enforced the very strict principle that only clergy ordained by orthodox bishops could give true and effective Baptism; but the Council of Arles (A.D. 314) decided that persons baptized by schismatics and heretics, provided the latter were in orders, were sufficiently baptized; and this decision was confirmed by the Council of Nicæa, which only ordered the re-baptization of those who had been baptized with another form than that ordained by our Lord. At a later period, St. Augustine (A.D. 354–430) and St. Jerome (A.D. 345–420) maintained, as indeed Tertullian had done two hundred years before, that the essence of

[1] Ignatius, Ep. to Smyrnæans, chap. viii.

the Sacrament consisted in the proper use of the water and the invocation of the Blessed Trinity, by any person whatsoever, whether or not they were in holy orders. This principle became commonly received in the mediæval Church, and the Council of Trent expressly affirmed it.

In the Church of England this principle was definitely laid down by authority from very early times, and the mediæval rubric of the Salisbury Baptismal Office was substantially retained in the Book of Common Prayer in the following form :—

"¶ *The Pastors and Curates shall oft admonish the people that they defer not And also they shall warn them that without great cause and necessity they baptize not children at home in their houses. And when great need shall compel them so to do, that then they minister it on this fashion.* ¶ *First, let them that be present call upon God for His grace, and say the Lord's Prayer, if the time will suffer. And then one of them shall name the child, and dip him in the water, or pour water upon him, saying these words :* ¶ *N.* I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. *And let them not doubt but that the child so baptized is lawfully and sufficiently baptized. . . .*" After the Hampton Court Conference, in 1603, the

above rubric was altered to meet the prejudices of the Puritans, the words "*lawful minister*" taking the place of "*one of them.*" In 1661, this was further altered to "*the minister of the parish,*" and at Bishop Cosin's suggestion was added, "*or in his absence, any other lawful minister that can be procured,*" as it stands at present.

The last alteration was probably designed to check the frequency of lay Baptisms; but it was made at a time when there were many thousands of persons in England who had only received lay Baptism, and as no provision accompanied it for the re-baptization of these, nor was any doubt thrown on the validity of their baptism, no alteration of the old principle could be designed. The phrase "any other lawful minister" is, in fact, the equivalent of an ancient Latin rubric referring to lay persons baptizing,[1] and the word "minister" is used to indicate the person ministering the Sacrament, without reference to his being a clergyman.

Thus it is evident that the Baptisms of Dis-

[1] "¶ Non licet laico vel mulieri aliquem baptizare, nisi in articulo necessitatis. Si vero vir et mulier adessent ubi immineret necessitatis articulus baptizandi puerum, et non esset *alius minister* ad hoc magis idoneus præsens, vir baptizet et non mulier, nisi forte mulier bene sciret verba sacramentalia et non vir, vel aliud impedimentum subesset."—Sarum Manual.

senters are not rendered invalid by the fact that those who administer them are not in Holy Orders, and that such Baptisms do not require to be supplemented by Baptism in the Church. If the proper form and matter of the Sacrament have been used, that is all that is required of necessity.

It must, however, be understood that Baptism should be administered by lay persons only in case of extreme necessity; and that such an administration of it would be a sinful act if deliberately undertaken by a person not in orders, when a clergyman might have been secured for the purpose.

It should also be added, that although lay Baptism is sufficient to make a person a Christian, and is certainly as efficient as priestly Baptism for salvation in case of a baptized infant's early death, yet it is best and safest for every one who has received Dissenting, or other lay Baptism, to be confirmed as soon as possible. A distinct law to this effect was laid down by the Council of Elvira, in A.D. 300; and this has been the principle on which the Church has acted ever since.

Finally, lay Baptism is justifiable only on account of the absolute necessity — so far as is revealed — of Baptism for salvation. The most

abundant of all elements, water, is appointed as the matter of the Sacrament, words which every Christian can easily know as its form, and any Christian, in case of necessity, as its minister, that the way to life being made so easy, no soul should fail of reaching it through want of regeneration.

§ 8. *Persons to be baptized.*

When the Apostles first began to carry out the commandment of our Lord, on the day of Pentecost, they probably baptized adult persons only; and all *converts* to Christianity, whether from among the Jews or the heathen, must necessarily have been such persons. But those who were anxious for the good of their children, had, not long before, brought them to Jesus, that He might touch them; and when it came to be known that Baptism was to the soul, now that Jesus had ascended into heaven, what His touch had been in the days of His dwelling among them visibly, there would be many again desirous of bringing their children to Him, and asking for them the benefit of the heavenly washing: still more, when the circumcision of infants was altogether discontinued. There seems, indeed, never to have been a word, or even

a thought, of doubt on the subject of such Baptisms in the early Church. Infants were known to be born in sin, and our Lord had said that *none* could enter into the kingdom of heaven except they were born of water and of the Spirit. Consequently, all who desired to have their children enter into that kingdom, and be freed from the sin in which they were born, would naturally bring them to Baptism, and the ministers of the Church would as naturally administer baptism to them. It would indeed have been strange if the children of those "households" whom St. Paul and others baptized were the only persons excluded from the saving rite; and they who dwelt simply on Christ's well-remembered words would have thought such an exclusion directly opposed to His command, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto Me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

But there exists abundant evidence that infants were baptized in the earliest ages after the time of the Apostles, and even while the Apostles were living. Justin Martyr (A.D. 148) speaks of many men and women in his time, who had been made disciples of Christ from their infancy, and were then leading pure lives at the age of sixty or seventy years; which would carry back their

Baptism as infants to a period about half-way between the martyrdoms of St. Peter and St. Paul and the death of St. John. Shortly after his time, Irenæus (A.D. 130—202) writes that Christ came to save all persons by Himself, through the new birth of Baptism—"infants, and little children, and boys, and young men, and old men. Therefore He passed through every stage of life; became an infant, that He might sanctify infants,—a little one, that He might sanctify little ones." St. Cyprian enjoined that infants should be baptized even before they were eight days old, because no infant was too young to be thus made a Christian. And so testimonies to Infant Baptism might be collected from all the earlier writers of the Church, all indicating a keen sense of the bondage under sin, in which they were by natural birth, and of the necessity under which the very youngest child lies for the regeneration of Holy Baptism. In fact, there is ample proof that newly-born children were universally baptized in the early Church when they were the children of Christian parents; and that infants were only not baptized when to have done so would have been to do violence to the natural right which heathen as well as Christian parents had over

their offspring, and to have entailed a danger of profaning the rite, by administering it to those who were likely to become apostates, through the influence of such as brought them up.

The rule of the Church of England is very distinctly expressed in a rubric at the head of the Office for Private Baptism:—"*The Curates of every parish shall often admonish the people, that they defer not the Baptism of their children longer than the first or second Sunday next after their birth, or other Holy-day falling between, unless upon a great and reasonable cause, to be approved by the Curate;*" and by another at the end of the Office for Public Baptism of Infants:—"*It is certain, by God's Word, that children which are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved.*"

Persons who have grown to full age without having been made Christians, ought to receive Holy Baptism now as much as in the Apostolic time; when the eunuch, St. Paul, the Philippian gaoler, and all who were converted from Judaism or heathenism, were made Christians in this way, and no other.[1] But before adults can be baptized,

[1] Even idiots should be baptized; and insane persons, if before their insanity, or during a lucid interval, they have expressed a wish to that effect.

they must be "sufficiently instructed in the principles of the Christian religion," and must have a solemn consciousness of the blessings and responsibilities which Baptism brings with it. Preparation for Adult Baptism is a very serious matter, but yet it must be undertaken; for whatever we may hope in respect to the uninstructed heathen, there is no reason to expect salvation without Baptism for anyone within whose reach it is placed.

§ 9. *The Effects of Holy Baptism.*

The words of our Lord, and of His Apostles, show that the general purpose for which Baptism was instituted may be stated in one word, as that of salvation. Such is the purport of Christ's discourse with Nicodemus, narrated in the third chapter of St. John's Gospel. The object of Nicodemus in coming to Christ was to obtain instruction respecting the new way of salvation, which the "Teacher come from God" was setting before men: and the very first words of that instruction enforce the absolute necessity of a new and spiritual birth by Baptism: "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto

thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

These words, standing by themselves, might not have seemed to have any association with the Sacrament of Baptism; and there was plainly no such association in the mind of Nicodemus as he listened to them. But as they were reiterated in an expanded form by our Lord, they place His intention to connect them with Baptism beyond doubt: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."[1] This is plainly a declaration that no person can become a Christian without being baptized.

Of a similar character are the words used by our Lord in His last commission to the Apostles: "And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."[2] The comprehensive force of this legislative and judicial commission cannot be evaded. It states, on the one hand, the saving power of Baptism, and, on the other, the awful result which follows upon an unbelieving rejection of it.

[1] St. John iii. 3, 5. [2] St. Mark xvi. 15.

Such general statements are also made both by St. Peter and St. Paul. The one concisely declares that "Baptism doth now save us;"[1] the other that, according to His mercy, God our Saviour "saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."[2]

There is nothing in these divine and inspired words to lead to the impression that Baptism may be regarded merely as a ceremonial admission to the visible Church, or an authoritative registration of the person baptized among the number of professing Christians. On the contrary, it is set forth as the very means by which the soul is to be saved; salvation being distinctly inferred to be the consequence of Baptism.[3]

[1] 1 St. Peter iii. 21. [2] Titus iii. 5.

[3] *Note on the state of Infants dying without Baptism.*—Any statement respecting the general necessity of Baptism to salvation is supposed by some to imply the conclusion that infants dying without being baptized are in the condition of lost souls. St. Paul does indeed use a very strong phrase to express the relation of the unbaptized to God, for he says, "We were by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (Eph. ii. 3); and this expression is adopted in the Catechism of the Church of England. But the inference that, because we are naturally the children of wrath, therefore infants not guilty of actual sin, but uncleansed from original sin, incur the punishment due from the wrath of God to sinners, is one which we are not justified in drawing.

The fact is, that there is much confusion of two separate

These decided declarations of Holy Scripture being taken as a statement of the general purpose for which this Sacrament was instituted, we may go on to consider, in more detail, how this purpose is effected; that is to say, what are the particular results of Baptism upon the persons baptized.

1. *Remission of Sins.*—When the last clauses were added to the Nicene Creed by the Council of Constantinople, in the year 381, one was included, which declares, "I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins." The meaning of this clause may be shown by paraphrasing it: "I acknowledge one Baptism, administered once only to each person, and only in one manner (that is, with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost), to be efficacious for the pardon of all sins,—original sin in infants, original and actual in penitent adults." This

things in speculations upon this painful subject; that is, between the penalty due to original sin by itself, and that due to actual sin built up on that evil foundation. The penalty due to original sin is the loss of the image of God, and of union with Him. We may reasonably suppose that the loss of these entails a loss, or rather a non-acquisition, of immortality. And hence we may further suppose that infants dying under the ban of original sin, but yet not guilty of actual sin, pass out of existence altogether, never having become "the children of God, the children of the Resurrection."

article of the Creed expresses the constant belief of the Church respecting the blessed results of Baptism, although it was only inserted where it now stands at the end of the fourth century.

The cleansing of human nature from defilements caused by sin was also an effect of Baptism, predicted in the language of prophecy long before the Sacrament itself was instituted. First, in Isaiah, by the words, "Wash you, make you clean. . . . Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."[1] Afterwards, in Ezekiel, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you."[2]

Such has been the doctrine of the Church from the beginning, though first formally stated by the fathers of the Constantinopolitan Council. It had been expressed long before by St. Peter, when he answered the inquirers on the day of Pentecost, "Repent, and be baptized . . . for the remission of sins;"[3] and by St. Paul, when he wrote, "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the Name of the

[1] Isa. i. 16, 18. [2] Ezek. xxxvi. 25. [3] Acts ii. 38.

Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."[1] And at a later period, when St. Jerome wrote, "All sins are forgiven in Baptism;"[2] or St. Augustine, "By the regeneration of the Spirit, remission is obtained, not only of original, but also of actual sins;"[3] and many other wise and holy men to the same effect. They were but stating the general belief of the Christian world, which looked upon Baptism as the "Sacrament of Absolution," wherein complete pardon was given by God.

Such also is clearly the doctrine of the Church of England, which (speaking in the language of the primitive Church) prays to Almighty God for those who are about to be confirmed in the express words, "Almighty and ever-living God, Who hast vouchsafed to regenerate these Thy servants by water and the Holy Ghost, and hast given unto them forgiveness of all their sins. . . ."

Those, therefore, whether in a Christian or a heathen country, who come to the font as adults, if they place no wilful obstacle (such as a determination to continue in sin, or an obstinate unbelief in grace) in the way of God's work on the soul, will receive forgiveness of actual as well as

[1] 1 Cor. vi. 11. [2] Jerom. Ep. lxxxv.
[3] Aug. de Peccat. Remiss. i. 15.

original sin:[1] while infants (who are unable to place any such obstacle in the way) receive forgiveness of the original sin in which all are born, so that they are no more to be accounted sinners until their own will and deed makes them so; and if they die before that time, they "are without fault before the throne of God:" virgin souls following in the train of the immaculate Lamb.

The remission of sins in Holy Baptism is therefore like the cleansing of Naaman from his leprosy, when "his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child." They who are "converted" go down into the waters of Baptism, and thus "become as little children." "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;

[1] Hooker speaks of "that act of grace which is dispensed to persons at their Baptism, or at their entrance into the Church, when they openly professing their faith, and undertaking their Christian duty, God most solemnly and formally doth absolve them from all guilt, and accepteth them to a state of favour with Him." (Serm. on Justification.) In the same manner Bishop Jewel declares in his Defence of the Apology of the Church of England: "We confess, and have evermore taught that in the Sacrament of Baptism, by the death and blood of Christ, is given remission of all manner of sin, and that not in half, in part, or by way of imagination, or by fancy, but whole, full, and perfect, of all together; so that now, as St. Paul saith, 'there is no condemnation to them that be in Christ Jesus.'" (Def. of Apol. II. xi. 3.)

who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies; who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed as the eagle's."

2. *Regeneration.*—With the all-important change of relation between fallen man and God which is effected by Baptism, there also ensues an actual change of nature by the restoration to the baptized person of that Image of God which was lost to Adam and to those whom he begat in *his own fallen* nature, by the sin which drove him out of Paradise. This, likewise, had been predicted by God through the prophet Ezekiel, in a passage already quoted as referring to this Sacrament: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them."[1] But our Lord fixed the idea and the name of Baptismal Regeneration in the mind of the Christian Church when He said, (with the impressive preface, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee,") "Except a man be born again—except a man be born of water

[1] Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27; compare xi. 19.

and of the Spirit—he cannot see—he cannot enter into—the kingdom of God."[1] St. Paul uses the term when he speaks of "the washing of regeneration;"[2] St. Peter when he speaks of "being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible;"[3] St. John several times in his First Epistle, and among his last words to the Church in his Gospel, when he declares the children of God to be "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."[4]

Thus we are led to the conclusion that this regeneration, or new birth, by Baptism is the bestowal of a new nature, and with it a new life: "Old things are passed away: behold, all things are become new." That which could previously trace its origin by a natural birth up through one sinner after another to the first sinful man of all, can now trace out a new origin, up to the sinless Man who has made Himself a new Head to the human race; that which as being born of the flesh is flesh, is now as being born of the Spirit become spirit also. That which was numbered among the children of wrath is now reckoned among the children of God.

[1] St. John iii. 3, 5.
[2] Titus iii. 5.
[3] 1 St. Peter i. 23.
[4] St. John i. 13.

By this regeneration, the work of the Fall in disuniting man from God is undone. It had been undone in the person of Christ, by His taking of the manhood into God; but Baptism undoes it in each individual person, by uniting that person to the manhood of Christ, through that to His divine nature, and hence with the other Persons of the blessed Trinity. The severed branch is once more grafted into the vine, and can only be again divided from it by fresh sin. The polished stone is built up into the wall of the mystical temple, and will never be removed except it become decayed and useless.

In this union with God, now first effected for the soul, lies the whole power of the Christian life. "Severed from me," said our Lord, "ye can do nothing." The natural powers of our being cannot keep us from sin, or impel us in the way of holiness. By becoming members of Christ, we become partakers of His supernatural powers; and according to the extent to which we are willing to use, and do use these, we are able to resist evil and the Evil One, and to accomplish works of obedience and holiness. As the life-blood courses through the most distant arteries of the living body, so grace from Christ, the "Life-

giving Spirit," flows onward to all His members; and "the life of God," as a moral condition, is a result of the life of God as a spiritual force.[1]

Such being the effects of regeneration, we may well take up the thanksgiving of St. Peter, and say, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."[2]

3. *Illumination.*—Another effect of Baptism is

[1] *Note on the "character" impressed by Baptism.*—In many theological writers, a "character" is said to be impressed upon the soul by Baptism, the idea being associated with the words of St. Paul in Eph. iv. 30: "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." The "seal" of Baptism here spoken of is thus considered analogous to the "sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith," spoken of in Rom. iv. 11. This mode of expressing the effect of Baptism in distinguishing the Christian from the Jew or the heathen, is only another way of saying, "Once a Christian, always a Christian." No crime, not even apostasy itself, can unchristianize a person who has been baptized, and the "character" is so indelibly impressed upon him, that as a Christian, whether lost or saved, he must stand before the judgment seat at the Last Day.

[2] 1 St. Peter i. 3—5.

the gift of a new intelligence, by which the Christian has a perception of all that comes within the range of faith, conscience, and love, that he could not except as a Christian possess.

Thus faith may almost be called a faculty belonging exclusively to the regenerated nature: the Christianized conscience has an intuitive perception of right and wrong, which does not belong to the natural conscience; and the affections of the soul towards God are capable of a far higher elevation in the Christian, than in one who has not been baptized.

The Christian's faith brings within his view, according to its development by holy living, the things of the unseen world, so that they are as much actual and existing things to his mind, as those by which he is surrounded. Doubt is unknown to his mind in respect to what God has revealed; and that not because his intellect is inferior to the intellect of doubters (as the latter are always so ready to assert), but because he has sharpened by use a faculty which doubters allow to lie dormant, or do their best to destroy. A person with a sensitive faith is, as regards spiritual mysteries, like a person with a sensitive logical instinct as regards matters of ordinary

reason. Not to believe what God has revealed, would be as impossible to the one, as it would be to the other not to see the force of sound reasoning; and what very illogical minds are to a logical mind, that is the sceptical mind to one whose faculty of faith has been developed and exercised.

In a similar manner, the moral perceptions of the natural conscience are intensified by Holy Baptism; and as the power to *do* the will of God is strengthened by union with Christ, so also is the ability to *know* the will of God. A carefully brought up Christian child has an instinctive knowledge of right and wrong, such as must rank in the highest grade of moral perception; and according as the sensitive conscience, formed by union with the Supreme Conscience in Holy Baptism, is developed in maturer life, so will that instinctive knowledge grow stronger and stronger, the most elaborate reasoning on morals being but, at the best, auxiliary to it.

Such illumination of faith and conscience must necessarily lead on to an intensification of love. The child naturally loves its parent, and the child of God naturally loves God. For the Christian not to love God is for him to swerve aside from

his Christian instincts and inclinations: for him to grow in love to God is for him to go forward in a straight path of progress, the starting-point of which is to be found in the spiritual sonship and parentage which Baptism established between him and his Father which is in heaven.

Such being the blessed effects of Baptism, no wonder the Psalmist sang in the name of the Church, "Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks, so longeth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God: when shall I come to appear before the presence of God? O God, Thou art my God, early will I seek Thee: my soul thirsteth for Thee." Faith beholds God making "a way in the sea, and a path in the great waters," breaking the power of Satan, "the heads of the dragons in the waters," undoing the work of the Fall, and re-creating souls to the inheritance of a new capacity for Paradise. It sees in the waters of Baptism the pathway to the Land of Promise in Christ's kingdom on earth, and to the glorified inheritance of the saints in light.

Hence the well-instructed Christian knows that when Christ united him to Himself in Holy

Baptism, He made him to partake of the "fatness of the good Olive," and established him like a tree planted by the water-side, that will bring forth his fruit in due season. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection. . . . Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

CHAPTER II.

CONFIRMATION.

FROM the days of the Apostles, and in every orthodox branch of the Church, the Sacrament of Holy Baptism has always been followed up (at an interval of time varying according to circumstances) by a supplementary rite. In Apostolic times this rite was known as "the Laying on of Hands," "the Seal," or "the Anointing," and the two latter names are still used in the Eastern Churches. But about the fourth century the name of "Confirmation" began to be used for it in the Western Churches, as indicating its object, the Confirmation by a Bishop of the Baptism previously administered.[1]

[1] "Ye have received the spiritual seal. . . . God the Father hath signed you, Christ, our Lord, hath *confirmed* you, and, as ye are taught by the Apostolic lection, hath given you the pledge of the Spirit in your hearts."—*St. Ambrose on the Sacraments*, vii. 42.

Our Lord adopted from the Jewish customs, the rite of laying on of hands, and He laid His hands on the little children that were brought to Him. But there is no record of any verbal institution of Confirmation by Him, as in the case of the Holy Eucharist, nor of any command given by Him for its administration to all persons, as in the case of Holy Baptism. As, however, Baptism was instituted by the act of our Lord in being Himself baptized, so Confirmation was instituted by that act whereby He became "anointed with the Holy Ghost, and with power,"[1] when He "went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him: and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."[2] As with Christ, so with Christians, this confirmation of Baptism has always been attributed to the Holy Ghost; and as the visible descent of the Holy Ghost on our Lord has always been called an "anointing," so from a very early period, perhaps from the first, an outward ceremony of anointing has been associated with the rite of Confirmation.

[1] Acts iv. 27, and x. 38. [2] St. Matt. iii. 16.

These circumstances offer some evidence, positive and negative, that the confirmation of Baptism was commanded by our Lord, as well as instituted in His own Person: positive, in the solemn association established between the Christian rite, and His own act; negative, in the improbability that so solemn an association would have been established except by His ordinance. The absence of such a command from Holy Scripture does not, therefore, fully prove that it was never given: and, among the unrecorded communications of the forty days after the Resurrection, when our Lord was with His Apostles, "speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God,"[1] there may have been one in obedience to which the rite of Confirmation was established in the Church.

§ 1. *Mode of administering Confirmation.*

The act of benediction which our Lord used when blessing little children,[2] was used by the Apostles at a very early period of their ministrations. Some of the people of Samaria were converted by the preaching of Philip the Deacon, and afterwards baptized by him. When the

[1] Acts i. 3. [2] St. Mark x. 16; St. Matt. xix. 15.

Apostles who were at Jerusalem heard of this, "they sent unto them Peter and John; who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (for as yet He was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost."[1] The same course was taken by St. Paul in the case of some Ephesian disciples of St. John the Baptist: "they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them."[2] In the latter case, and perhaps in the former, the supplementary rite not only confirmed the Baptism of the converts, but also conveyed special gifts from the Holy Ghost,—the power to "speak with tongues," and to "prophesy:" but it is reasonable to suppose that these results accompanied the rite of Confirmation only in exceptional cases, and for purposes connected with some special work to be done by the persons whose Baptism the Apostles confirmed by laying their hands upon them.

No mention is made in these cases of the ceremony of anointing; but St. Paul appears to refer

[1] Acts viii. 12—17. [2] Acts xix. 5, 6.

to it as associated with the rite of Confirmation in an Epistle written a few months later. The Apostle writes, "Now He which *stablisheth* us with you in Christ, and hath *anointed* us, is God; who hath also *sealed* us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."[1] All three of the words in italics were afterwards used to signify that "earnest of the Spirit" which was believed to be given by laying on of the bishop's hands after Baptism; and it seems very improbable that they should be so associated together by St. Paul unless he had the rite in his mind. In a later Epistle there are expressions which strongly illustrate the supposition that he was referring to Confirmation when thus writing, for there also he says, "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were *sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance;*"[2] words which seem to refer to his own acts of laying his hands on the Ephesians to whom he was writing. St. John also writes to his "little children" in terms which certainly refer to some rite in which the ceremony of unction was used:

[1] 2 Cor. i. 21. [2] Eph. i. 13: see also iv. 30.

"Ye have an *unction* from the Holy One: . . . the *anointing* which ye have received of Him abideth in you."[1]

It is well known that "sealing" was a term in common use to signify Confirmation in the sub-Apostolic age, and that it meant marking the sign of the cross on the forehead with oil which had been solemnly blessed by a bishop. Hence there is great probability that "stablishing" or confirming, by "anointing," and "sealing," was an Apostolic usage; especially since Tertullian, writing within a century after St. John's death, says that this was "*de pristina disciplina*," a primitive custom. As St. John wrote of our Lord, "Him hath God the Father sealed;"[2] and St. Peter had long before declared "how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power;"[3] so there can be little doubt that the coming of the Holy Ghost to Christians was regarded as an "anointing," and that the significant ceremony of an external unction accompanied that of imposition of hands in the time of the Apostles, as it certainly did in the primitive Church of a later century.[4]

[1] 1 St. John ii. 20, 27. [2] St. John vi. 27. [3] Acts x. 38.
[4] In 2 Tim. ii. 19, St. Paul writes: "The foundation of God

What other forms and ceremonies accompanied the administration of Confirmation in the Apostolic age cannot be ascertained. But in the times immediately following some light is thrown upon the question by the writings of the Fathers. Tertullian, already quoted, says: "After this, having come out from the bath, we are anointed thoroughly with a blessed unction. . . . Next to this, the hand is laid upon us, calling upon, and inviting the Holy Spirit, through the blessing."[1] St. Cyprian, too, writes: "Anointed also must he of necessity be who is baptized, that having received the chrism, that is, unction, he may be the anointed of God, and have within him the grace of Christ;" and when expounding the passage in the Acts respecting the Confirmation of the Samaritans by St. Peter and St. John, he says: "Which now also is done among us, those baptized in the Church being brought to the bishops of the Church, and by our prayer and laying on of hands, they receive the

standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." Those who are familiar with the medal formed hanging seals attached to ancient documents, will see how strikingly the inscription on each side of such illustrates the Apostle's idea of a seal confirming the promise of the Lord on the one hand, and the vow of the Christian on the other.

[1] Tertull. on Baptism, vii. viii.

Holy Ghost, and are perfected with the seal of the Lord."[1] In the Apostolic Constitutions, which were written down not later than the early part of the fifth century, the following thanksgiving has been preserved, which is not unlikely to be of much earlier date :—" O Lord God, the unbegotten, who hast no lord, who art Lord of all; who madest the sweet savour of the knowledge of the Gospel to go forth among all nations; grant now, that this chrism may be effectual in this baptized person; that the sweet savour of Thy Christ may remain firm and stable in him; and that he being dead with Him, may rise again and live with Him." These fragmentary relics of the primitive ritual, and the testimony of the earliest writers to the signing of the cross on the forehead, are all that we know respecting the administration of Confirmation in the Apostolic and immediately succeeding ages of the Church.

But the form used in the Church of England as early as the seventh century is still extant, and is of enough interest to be given here. It is taken from the Pontifical of Egbert, Archbishop of York, and is probably the form which was used by St. Cuthbert, of whom the Venerable Bede writes

[1] St. Cyprian's Epistles, lxx. 3; lxxiii. 8.

that he used to go round his diocese bountifully distributing counsels of salvation, "as well as laying his hands on the lately baptized, that they might receive the grace of the Holy Ghost."

"THE CONFIRMATION OF MEN, TO BE SPOKEN BY A BISHOP.

"*How he is to Confirm.*

"Almighty, everlasting God, who hast vouchsafed to regenerate this Thy servant with water and the Holy Ghost, and who hast given unto him remission of all his sins, pour into him, O Lord, the sevenfold Spirit, Thine Holy Comforter, from heaven. *Amen.* Give him the Spirit of wisdom and understanding. *Amen.* The Spirit of counsel and strength. *Amen.* The Spirit of knowledge and piety. *Amen.* Fill him with the Spirit of the fear of God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of Thy favour: sign him with the sign of Thy holy cross unto eternal life.

"*Here he is to put the chrism on the forehead of the man, and say:*

"Receive the sign of the holy cross, by the chrism of salvation, in Jesus Christ unto eternal life. *Amen.*

" The Lord be with you.

" *And with Thy Spirit.*

" The peace and blessing of the Lord be ever with thee. *And with Thy Spirit.*

" *Afterwards, he is to say this prayer:*

" God the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, confirm thee, that thou mayest have eternal life; and thou shalt live for ever. So thus let every man be blessed that feareth the Lord. The Lord from out of Zion bless thee, and mayest thou see the things which are good in Jerusalem all the days of thy life. Peace be with thee unto eternal life. *Amen.*

" *Then they are to be bound* [with a band of linen round the forehead].

" O God, who gavest the Holy Ghost to Thy Apostles, and didst will that He should be given to the rest of the faithful by them and their successors, look favourably upon our humble service, and grant unto all them whose foreheads we have this day anointed and signed with the sign of the cross, that the Holy Ghost coming upon their hearts may perfect them for a temple of His glory, by worthily inhabiting them. Through.

"*Then they are to be communicated of the Sacrifice.*

"*The episcopal benediction follows.*

"God Almighty, who created all things out of nothing, bless you, and grant you in baptism and in confirmation remission of all sins. *Amen.*

"And may He who gave the Holy Ghost in fiery tongues to His disciples, enlighten your hearts by His own enlightening, and duly kindle them to the love of Himself. *Amen.*

"So that, being cleansed from all vices, defended by His own assistance from all adversities, we may be worthy to be made His temple. *Amen.*

"May He who created you guard you from all imminent evils, and defend you from all wickedness. *Amen.*"

This form is substantially the same as that which was used in the Church of England down to the time of the Reformation. In the first English Prayer-book (A.D. 1549) little alteration of the Office was made, the actual words of Confirmation being still: "*N.* I sign thee with the sign of the cross, and lay my hand upon thee, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. *Amen.*" The present form of words was substituted in 1552; and the question, "Do ye here," &c. was,

in 1661, substituted for that "apposing" in the Catechism, which was originally required to take place in the presence of the Bishop at the time of Confirmation.[1]

Such alterations as were made in the Office at the time of the Reformation, and afterwards, appear to have been made for the purpose of enforcing more strictly the imposition of hands on each person confirmed, and bringing it prominently

[1] "It is probable that the sign of the cross was still used by our bishops, for its use is defended as if it were a well-known custom in a sermon by Edward Boughen, chaplain to Howson, Bishop of Oxford. This sermon was preached at the Bishop's first visitation, on September 27th, 1619, Confirmations at that time being part of the Episcopal Visitation. Boughen's words are as follows: 'The cross, therefore, upon this or the like consideration, is enjoined to be used in Confirmation in the Book of Common Prayer, set forth and allowed in Edward VI.'s reign. And I find it not at any time revoked: but it is left, as it seems, to the Bishop's discretion to use or not to use the cross in Confirmation.' No doubt this represents the feeling of many who were occupied at various times with the revision of the Prayer-book. It might be desirable to omit the mention of many things for the sake of relieving the consciences of persons to whom they were a burden; but such omission was not necessarily to bind those in whose eyes the things omitted were precious, to a total disuse of primitive and holy ceremonies. Charity towards those who disliked ceremonies was not intended to exclude charity towards those who loved them; and the Prayer-book thus represented in many places the *minimum* of ceremonial usage customary in the Church of England, but left the *maximum* to be sought from tradition."—*Annotated Book of Common Prayer*, p. 250.

forward as the essential part of the rite. In the mediæval Church of England, as in the modern Church of Rome, the hand of the Bishop touched the person only when signing them and anointing them; and a "lifting up of the hands" in the attitude of benediction[1] was used afterwards over a large number together. English bishops of modern times have said the words, "Defend, O Lord," in a similar manner, but have always laid one or both hands previously on each individual person; and whether unction and the sign of the cross are used or not, this definite imposition of hands seems to be more in accordance with the principle of the rite, and with its original form of administration.[2]

§ 2. *The Age proper for Confirmation.*

It has been already stated that the primitive custom of the Church was to administer Confirmation immediately after Baptism. This was the case whether the person baptized was an adult, a youth, or an infant; and in every instance the Holy Eucharist was administered immediately

[1] See St. Luke xxiv. 50.

[2] Out of twenty-three Confirmation Offices printed by the great liturgical scholar Martene, imposition of hands is mentioned, however, only in two.

afterwards. Such continued also to be the custom of the Church so long as the administration of Baptism was chiefly confined to the most solemn seasons of the year, as Easter and Whitsuntide, when a bishop was always present. At a later period, Baptisms were administered at other seasons, when a bishop could not always be present to confirm. The Eastern Church then permitted Confirmation to be given by the baptizing priest using chrism which had been previously blessed with much solemnity by a bishop. In the Western Church the Confirmation was delayed until the baptized infant, or adult, could be brought to the bishop; but the delay was required to be as short as possible. As late as A.D. 1322 Reynolds, Archbishop of Canterbury, enjoined that "parents be often admonished to carry their baptized children to the bishop for Confirmation, and not to stay long for the coming of the bishop, but to carry them to him when he is in the neighbourhood, as soon as may be after Baptism." But at the time of the Reformation children were not brought to the bishop before the age of seven, and even at an earlier period five years had been assigned as the limit in some dioceses.

When the first Book of Common Prayer in English was printed, the following rubric (part of which was adopted as an exhortation in 1661) was prefixed to the Office for Confirmation, in which three reasons are given for deferring the administration of the rite to children until they have received some instruction in the principles of religion.

"To the end that Confirmation may be ministered to the more edifying of such as shall receive it (according to St. Paul's doctrine, who teacheth that all things should be done in the Church to the edification of the same), it is thought good, that none hereafter shall be confirmed but such as can say, in their mother tongue, the articles of the faith, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and can also answer to such questions of this short catechism as the bishop (or such as he shall appoint) shall, by his discretion, appose them in. And this order is most convenient to be observed for divers considerations.

"First, because that when children come to the years of discretion, and have learned what their godfathers and godmothers promised for them in Baptism, they may then themselves, with their own mouth and with their own consent, openly

before the Church, ratify and confess [1] the same; and also promise that, by the grace of God, they will evermore endeavour themselves faithfully to observe and keep such things as they, by their own mouth and confession, have assented unto.

"Secondly, forasmuch as Confirmation is ministered to them that be baptized, that, by imposition of hands and prayer, they may receive strength and defence against all temptations to sin, and the assaults of the world and the devil, it is most meet to be ministered when children come to that age, that partly by the frailty of their own flesh, partly by the assaults of the world and the devil, they begin to be in danger to fall into sin.

"Thirdly, for that it is agreeable with the usage of the Church in times past, whereby it was ordained that Confirmation should be ministered to them that were of perfect age, that they, being instructed in Christ's religion, should openly pro-

[1] The absurd idea that Confirmation consists chiefly or entirely of the repetition of the baptismal vow, has been much fostered by the unfortunate change of the word "confess," to "confirm," in 1552. It is hardly necessary to say that every child ratifies and confirms his baptismal vow when he replies to one of the questions in the Catechism that "Yes, verily," he is bound to believe and do all that his sponsors promised for him at his Baptism; but that he himself is confirmed only by the imposition of the bishop's hands.

fess their own faith, and promise to be obedient unto the will of God.

"And that no man shall think that any detriment shall come to the children by deferring of their Confirmation, he shall know for truth that it is certain, by God's Word, that children being baptized (if they depart out of this life in their infancy) are undoubtedly saved."

From the first and last words of this valuable rubrical statement, it appears that the delay was not intended to extend much beyond infancy; and this is corroborated by the familiar words used at the Baptism of Infants, "Ye are to take care that this child be brought to the bishop to be confirmed by him, so soon as he can say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, in the vulgar tongue, and be further instructed in the Church Catechism set forth for that purpose." There are few children who cannot fulfil these conditions at ten or twelve years of age; and it was the universal practice to confirm about that age until indifference in one period, and the want of theological knowledge in another, led first to the neglect and rare administration of the rite, and secondly to a mistaken notion of its true purpose. The rule of the Prayer-book is, however, very dis-

tinct and clear, and the laity may rest assured that no adequately learned and pious bishop would ever refuse to confirm a child who was proved to fulfil, at whatever age, the required conditions.

§ 3. *The Effects of Confirmation.*

The rite of Confirmation so far answers to the definition of a Sacrament that the laying on of hands is "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us." Hence, when Christians are confirmed they are said to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, as is said of some of the first converts to Christ, for the inner work of Confirmation is especially the work of the Holy Spirit. His anointing came upon our Lord Jesus Christ after His Baptism, and from the Head it flows down upon the members, "even to the very skirts of His clothing." There is not, indeed, any such union between human nature and the Holy Ghost as there is between it and the human nature of Christ: though through the latter union men are even "partakers of the Divine Nature," so as to be in union with the non-Incarnate Persons of the blessed Trinity. But that gift of the Spirit which is bestowed in Confirma-

tion is one of those of which St. Paul says, "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. . . . For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, . . . and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."[1] As there was a gift bestowed by the Holy Ghost for working miracles, another for speaking with tongues, others for various other supernatural purposes; so there is a gift bestowed for the strengthening of the Christian soul by the rite of Confirmation, and for establishing it firmly in the Body of Christ into which it has been grafted by Baptism.

Thus it may be said that Confirmation duly given and duly received, sets the Christian soul again at the start-point of Holy Baptism, renewing and reviving the grace of God then planted; confirming all the promises and all the gifts belonging to that initiatory Sacrament; giving an effective strength to all the latent forces of the Christian character, and imprinting that character afresh upon the soul.

This is beautifully set forth in the words of

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 4—6, 13.

an ancient Homily which was used in the Church of England many centuries ago. "In Baptism the Christian was born again spiritually to live, in Confirmation he is made bold to fight. There he received remission of sin, here he receiveth increase of grace. There the Spirit of God did make him a new man, here the same Spirit doth defend him in his dangerous conflict. There he was washed and made clean, here he is nourished and made strong. In Baptism he was chosen to be God's son, and an inheritor of His heavenly kingdom: in Confirmation God shall give him His Holy Spirit to be his Mentor, to instruct him and perfect him, that he lose not by his folly that inheritance which he is called unto. In Baptism he was called and chosen to be one of God's soldiers, and had his white coat of innocency delivered unto him, and also his badge, which was the red cross, the instrument of His passion, set upon his forehead and other parts of his body: in Confirmation he is encouraged to fight, and take the armour of God put upon him, which be able to bear off the fiery darts of the devil, and to defend him from all harm, if he will use them in his battle, and not put himself in danger of his enemies by entering the field without them."

Thus, although Baptism does its own work effectually on the soul, Confirmation is given as its supplement when the struggle with the world, the flesh, and the devil, is about to begin in earnest, even as the Holy Spirit descended on our baptized Lord when He was about to go forth into the wilderness to His Temptation. It is this which makes it so desirable that Confirmation should be administered to young children at least as early as the time when the full development of human nature commences. All temptations begin at that time to attain greater strength: at that time therefore the children of God should again be put into His hands, that He may once more bless them as they go forth on a new and more hazardous portion of the road they have to travel.

It must be remembered, lastly, that in Confirmation the same ceremony is used as in Ordination, which is not without significance. For it is by Confirmation that baptized Christians become members of that "royal priesthood" of which St. Peter writes, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people."[1] The gift of the Spirit in Ordination

[1] 1 St. Peter ii. 9.

qualifies persons for the work of the ministry; the gift of the Spirit in Confirmation qualifies persons for that universal ministry by which all take their part in the solemn work of divine worship. Consequently those who are confirmed are at once admissible to full participation in that act of divine worship from which all other such acts diverge, and around which they all gather. They are now competent to take their part in the Sacrifice of the Holy Eucharist, saying "Amen at the giving of thanks," and adoring "with angels and archangels, and all the company of heaven," the Majesty of their present Lord. They are now competent also to receive their portion of that Sacrifice, so that they may be further edified (that is, built up) in the temple of Christ's Body, and that on the grace of Baptism and Confirmation which has been laid and renewed in their souls, there may also be edified a continually increasing superstructure of the good gifts of God, the work of His Holy Spirit in their souls.

CHAPTER III.

THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

THE climax of all Sacraments is that which our Blessed Lord ordained in commemoration of His Passion. All other rites look up to this one, and are a preparation either for receiving, or for celebrating it: the grace of each of them finds its complement in the grace bestowed at the Altar. To distinguish this from the others, therefore, Christian feeling has been accustomed to call it by the name of the "*Blessed* Sacrament," the "*Holy* Sacrament," "*The* Sacrament;" under a consciousness that the generic term needs some special affix when used to designate so exalted a rite, for that at the best it can only do so imperfectly.

The difficulty of finding a name which should comprehensively signify the whole of this mystery

has, indeed, been one which the power of language has failed to overcome; and various names have been adopted for it according to the particular phase, or the particular effect of it, which has been chiefly in view. Thus it was called the "Mass," that is the "offering," during many centuries in the Church of England, with reference to its sacrificial aspect;[1] but when it became necessary to bring more into view its aspect as a means of union between God and the soul, it began to be more generally called the "Holy Communion." But the rigid use of any such name as only expresses a single purpose of this Sacrament has the effect of keeping its other purposes too little in view, and it should always be remembered that a complete definition cannot be found in any of the titles by which it is known. The most comprehensive one is that of "the Holy Eucharist," which is derived from a Greek word used in all the four narratives of our Lord's Institution of the Sacrament, and which signifies "a giving of thanks." This name has

[1] The word "Mass" is derived from "Missa," which occurs at the end of the ancient Latin Liturgy, in the words "Ite, missa est," the meaning of which is that the communicants are now dismissed, the Eucharistic sacrifice having been "sent up" to, or "offered" at, the throne of God.

been adopted very generally, and from very early times, as expressive of that rite of the Church by which the Passion of our Lord is commemorated before God in a great act of thanksgiving for His mercy.[1]

§ 1. *Our Lord's Institution of the Holy Eucharist.*

The words and acts of our Lord in instituting the great Sacrament by which His Passion was to be commemorated, are recorded by three of the Evangelists and by St. Paul. He and His disciples were already assembled to celebrate the most solemn rite of the Jewish religion, the Passover supper: in which the principal ceremony was that of each one eating a small piece of a lamb which had been previously offered as a sacrifice in the Temple, a portion being burnt on

[1] The use of another term, "the Lord's Supper," is derived from 1 Cor. xi. 21, where St. Paul applies it to the love-feast which then succeeded the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. It has led to much misapprehension of the true nature of the Sacrament; but no mistake is so unworthy of educated persons as that committed in some churches, and lately in Westminster Abbey, by placing the last Supper of our Lord with His disciples over the altar as a symbol of the institution of the Eucharist. These representations are usually copied from Leonardo da Vinci's picture, which was painted for a dining-room, not for a church.

the altar, and the remainder taken home for the ceremonial supper. The occasion has a remarkable bearing on the nature of the Holy Eucharist itself from the fact that within a few hours our Lord was to become a Sacrifice Himself,—the Lamb of God, offered upon the Cross; and that the most prominent words which He used in instituting the Sacrament were, "Take, eat; this is My Body. Drink ye all of it; for this is My Blood:" words which of themselves convey the idea that the new rite, as well as the old one, was one in which the feeding on a Sacrifice was a conspicuous feature. Nothing could be *accidental* in our Lord's words and acts at such a time, if ever, and we are bound to believe that such an association of ideas was intended: an association of ideas clearly in the mind of St. Paul when he wrote, "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast."[1]

Beyond the circumstances under which the acts and words of our Lord were spoken and done on this occasion we come to the acts and words themselves. These, as narrated by St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke, may be harmonized as follows:—

[1] 1 Cor. v. 7, 8.

"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it,"—or "gave thanks,[1]—and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is My Body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of Me. Likewise also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is My Blood of the New Testament,"—or, "this cup is the New Testament in My Blood[2]—which is shed for you"[3] and "for many,[4] for the remission of sins."[5]

St. Paul gives an independent account of the institution of the Sacrament, which he wrote in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, four years before the gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark were written, and six years before that of St. Luke. Respecting this account he makes the very remarkable statement that he had received it, not from any of those Apostles who were present on the occasion, but from the Lord Jesus himself. His words are: "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was

[1] St. Luke. [2] Id. [3] Id.
[4] St. Matthew, St. Mark.
[5] St. Matt. xxvi. 26—28; St. Mark xiv. 22—24; St. Luke xxii. 19, 22.

betrayed took bread: and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is My Body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of Me. After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in My Blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me." [1]

About six years previously, St. Paul had been careful to impress upon the Galatians that the Gospel which he preached was not learned from any human source, but by direct revelation. "For," said he, "I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." [2] Hence it appears that as the Gospel itself was communicated to St. Paul by our Lord himself after His ascension into heaven, so were also the acts and words with which He had instituted, and celebrated for the first time, the Sacrament of the Holy Communion. This fact may serve to impress us with an idea of the importance of those acts and words, since our Lord himself thus provided for their right tradition at the mouth of the Apostle, even before they were recorded by the pens of Evangelists.

[1] 1 Cor. xi. 23—25 [2] Gal. i. 12.

Looking, then, upon these acts and words of our Lord with a sufficient sense of their solemn importance, we shall be prepared to consider them as used and spoken with a definite purpose and meaning: and we shall not venture to say of them that they were of no special force as regarded the future, since our Lord himself indicated the contrary by this subsequent revelation of them to St. Paul, who had not been present when the institution of the Sacrament took place. And thus it will not be thought too minute an analysis when these acts and words are separated from each other, as follows, for the purpose of exhibiting them with greater distinctness.

1. Jesus took bread.
2. He blessed it, or "gave thanks" over it.
3. He brake it.
4. He gave it to the disciples to eat.
5. He declared what He so gave them to eat to be His Body.
6. He directed them to "do this" in remembrance of Him.
7. He took the cup.
8. He "gave thanks" over it also.
9. He gave it to the disciples to drink.

10. He declared that what He so gave them to drink was His Blood.

11. He directed them to "do this" so often as they should drink it, in remembrance of Him.

In these formal and ceremonious acts and words there are also special peculiarities which may not be at once evident, but which must have great weight in determining their true meaning and intention.

1. The *blessing* and *giving thanks* are not to be confused with the benediction of food before, or the thanksgiving after, an ordinary meal: the very fact of the thanks being given *before*, and not *after*, the eating and drinking, showing that the words are used in a peculiar sense. But the Divine benediction is always spoken of in Holy Scripture as possessing an active force towards the person or thing which God has blessed, as may be seen by referring to the words "God blessed," in various passages, by means of a Concordance. As regards our Lord, it is recorded twice before that He used such a benediction towards *things* as distinct from *persons*: first, by St. Matthew, who states that Jesus "took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, He blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to His

disciples;"[1] secondly, by St. Mark, when he writes that Jesus "blessed" the "few small fishes," before they were distributed to the four thousand;[2] and a third time, by St. Luke, who narrates that when about to feed the five thousand, "He took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, He blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude."[3] The phrase "giving thanks" is also used in respect to these two miracles of our Lord, St. Mark saying that "He took the seven loaves, and gave thanks, and brake;"[4] and St. John, that "Jesus took the loaves; and when He had given thanks, He distributed to the disciples;"[5] the phrase being emphatically repeated by the latter Evangelist a few verses beyond.

These two occasions are the only ones (except in the case under consideration) in which our Lord is said to have "blessed," or to have "given thanks" over inanimate objects, and in each case the benediction, or thanksgiving, has an evident relation to the miraculous result which was to follow,—the endowment of the small quantity of bread and the two or three fishes with the pro-

[1] St. Matt. xiv. 19. [2] St. Mark viii. 7. [3] St. Luke ix. 16.
[4] St. Mark viii. 6. [5] St. John vi. 11, 23.

perty of increase, so that they should suffice for the food of four thousand men in the one case, and five thousand in the other, beside women and children. This conspicuous association of the words with these two miracles (in which the re-creation of bread, or the endowment of it with a new property, is the prominent result of the blessing), leads us plainly and simply to a similar reverent association of them with the new property which our Lord gave to the bread and wine which He blessed, and over which He gave thanks, at the institution of the Holy Eucharist; which He endowed with a new property,—that of *spiritual* nourishment,—and of which He spoke as re-created elements, when He said of them, "This is my Body," "This is my Blood."

2. The expressions, "Take, eat; this is my Body," "Drink ye all of it, for this is my Blood," must inevitably have conveyed to the Apostles, accustomed as they were to the sacrifices of the Temple, the idea of feeding on a sacrificed victim.

3. "This do," strange as it may seem to the reader unacquainted with Septuagint and New Testament Greek, has a special meaning, which is not represented by the English words,—that of "Offer this." Our Lord was, in fact, using a

well-known expression, significant of the act of sacrifice, and one which could hardly have any other meaning when used under the circumstances of the case.[1] Accordingly, St. Chrysostom's comment on the expression, when it occurs in St. Matthew's account of the institution is, "See how He weans and draws them from Jewish rites; 'For,' says He, 'as ye offered that'" (the Passover) "'in remembrance of the miraculous deliverance from Egypt, so offer this in remembrance of Me. That blood was shed for preservation of the first-born; this for the remission of the sins of the whole world.'"[2]

4. The word "remembrance" has also a special force in the original Greek, which is not fully represented in the English. The same Greek word is used in the Septuagint version, in Numbers x. 10, "That they may be to you for a *memorial* before your God;" and also in

[1] The same Greek word is used by St. Paul with reference to the Passover, in Heb. xi. 28. It is frequently translated by the words "offer" and "sacrifice," and by equivalent terms, in the Old Testament.

[2] It need hardly be pointed out that the limitation of the words "This do," to the *reception* of the consecrated elements is an unlearned error. That "This do ye, as oft as ye drink it," cannot mean, "This drink ye," is at once evident, without other argument.

Leviticus xxiv. 7, in a similar manner. The true meaning, therefore, of "in remembrance of Me," is "for a memorial of Me," and the sense of the whole words is not "Eat and drink this to remind yourselves of Me," but "Offer this for a memorial of Me,"—as with the peace-offerings of old, "for a memorial before your God."

Thus it will be seen that if the four narratives of the institution of the Holy Eucharist are carefully examined, on the principle of making Holy Scripture its own self-interpreting commentary, much meaning may be found in the words used by our Lord: a fulness of meaning which will be the key to a proper understanding of the Blessed Sacrament itself.

§ 2. *Our Lord's Presence in the Holy Eucharist.*

The whole virtue and value of the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist lies in our Lord's own personal association with it: this, therefore, forms the central pillar of all doctrine respecting it.

His own words at the time, when instituting the Sacrament, are the foundation of our knowledge on this subject; and they contain the simple statement respecting the eucharistized

bread, "This is My Body;" and, respecting the eucharistized wine, "This is My Blood."

This phraseology was not altogether new to the disciples, for our Lord had used it in a very striking manner about twelve months before, when He had spoken to them and others after the miracle of feeding the five thousand from five loaves of bread and two small fishes. In this prophetic discourse[1] He took up the words of those who had half cavilled at His miracle, as inferior to that of the manna in the wilderness, by declaring that even the manna was not brought down from heaven, "but My Father giveth you the true Bread from heaven;" a statement which He immediately followed up with the words, "I am the Bread of Life." This declaration He shortly repeated, saying, "I am that Bread of Life," and still more emphasized by adding, "I am the living Bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." Had these words stood alone, they could not but have recurred to the memory of the Apostles, when similar phraseology was repeated

[1] St. John vi. 30—63.

by our Lord at the institution of the Holy Eucharist. But they had not stood alone; for some of the Jews had asked, "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" and our Lord had replied by still more striking, emphatic, and memorable words, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever." Words like these could not easily have been forgotten, and we may be quite sure that they who had heard such very serious declarations of our Lord, must at once have recalled them to mind, when He instituted the Holy Eucharist. It is not too much, even, to suppose that during the twelve months' interval they had been asking themselves again and again what He could mean by giving them His flesh to eat, and

His blood to drink; and that on that evening of His betrayal the true meaning flashed suddenly upon them, as He uttered those words, "*This* is My Body, *This* is My Blood."

That these words of our Lord were understood by the Apostles to refer to all subsequent celebrations of the Holy Eucharist, and not only to that by Christ himself, is shown by the manner in which St. Paul applies the doctrine which they contain. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"[1] "Whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. . . . For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body."[2] Such an application of our Lord's words, nearly a quarter of a century after they had been spoken, shows that they had already become the well-established foundation of principle and belief respecting the "blessed," or "consecrated" elements of the Sacrament. Nor is there anything on the face of those words, in the context, or in

[1] 1 Cor. x. 16. [2] Id. xi. 27, 29.

St. Paul's application of them, to indicate that they were used otherwise than in their literal meaning. So used, they did indeed express a most mysterious fact, but there is no evidence that they were considered to state anything else; nor does the mystery of the statement appear to have interfered with its reception by the early Church.

In later times, however,—about thirteen or fourteen hundred years after St. Paul's days,—it began to be denied that there was any mystery in our Lord's words. Certain extravagancies, into which a too great subtlety of reasoning had led some divines, reacted in an opposite direction upon others; and the notion was started that this language was figurative, not literal—a notion which has spread very extensively since the Reformation.

This strange notion can only be maintained by a perversion, or an interpolation, of our Lord's words; and those who support it are therefore accustomed to assert that the expression, "This is My Body," means "This is [a figure of] My Body," "This is [a memorial of] My Body," or something of the kind. But no reverent mind could seriously take so great a liberty as this with

words uttered by Christ on so solemn an occasion; nor would any really logical reasoner be content to accept that as an explanation of the words which is neither more nor less than a perversion of them.

There is, however, another, and less irreverent argument used by those who consider that these words are figurative. Our Lord said, "I am the Door," "I am the good Shepherd," "I am the true Vine," and a comparison is drawn between these and the words of Institution. Our Lord is not literally the Door, but figuratively; therefore it is said, "This" is not literally, but figuratively, His "Body." But in the expressions quoted, and in others like them, there is an evident metaphor in every case. Our Lord is metaphorically the Door, because through Him men have entrance to the Throne of Grace; He is the good Shepherd, because He protects and leads His people; He is the true Vine, because from Him all have their spiritual growth and strength, as branches grow and are nourished from the stem and root. But no such plain metaphor is thus obvious in the words, "This is My Body," especially when joined with "which is given for you," since Christ's Body was a real one, not one figuratively called by that

name, and it was truly given for us. Moreover, the grammatical construction of the sentence, "This is My Body," is totally different from that of the sentences, "I am the Door," "I am the true Vine," &c.; and the two forms could only be brought into analogy with each other by altering the latter to "This Door is Me," "This Vine is My Body." In thus forcing the two forms into some likeness towards each other, we at once see how unlike they naturally are.

And figurative language always, indeed, carries with it some evidence of its character. It is the language of a dream, a vision, a parable, or a type: a dream, as when the seven kine are called seven years; a vision, as when "the seven candlesticks are the seven churches;" a parable, as when our Lord says, "the field is the world;" a type, as when St. John Baptist pointed to Jesus, and said, "Behold the Lamb of God."

The only figurativeness about these words of our Lord is that the sacramental signs spoken of are figures of the sacramental realities which they signify and convey—the outward elements of the inward substances. "In the type of bread," says St. Cyril of Jerusalem, "is given to thee His Body, and in the type of wine His Blood."

"Receive ye that in the bread," says St. Augustine, "which hung upon the Cross; receive ye that in the cup which flowed from the Side." Nor does this figurativeness at all interfere with the literalness of the words, for "the outward part, or sign," is a figure of "the inward part, or thing signified," both being parts of the Sacrament given. There could, therefore, be no Sacrament, but only an outward sign, unless our Lord's words are literally true, "This is My Body;" and they overthrow the nature of a Sacrament who suppose them to be figurative.[1]

Thus, then, we arrive at the conclusion, which is in agreement with the belief of the vast majority of Christians from our Lord's time to our own day, that the words, "This is My Body, This is My Blood," indicate a real, supernatural presence of Christ's true Body and Blood in the consecrated elements of the Holy Eucharist. In what manner God causes the inward Substance to unite itself to the outward element, or the outward element to be the means of conveying the inward

[1] Transubstantiation is a theory that only one substance, the Body of Christ, is present in the consecrated bread. The figurative theory is also that only one substance, the bread, is present. The same with the other element,

Substance, is not revealed to us in Holy Scripture, and is not evident to the reason.

> "Christ was the Word that spake it,
> And what the Word doth make it,
> That I believe and take it."

The *fact* Christ has told us; the manner in which that fact is brought about remains a mystery not yet intelligible to us, but not necessarily beyond the reach, for ever, of the human intellect. Until we understand the mystery, we must simply believe it; receiving it *on trust* with our *faith*, because Christ has told it to us. The time may come when the intellect will be so much developed as to be able to penetrate such mysteries. Till then, the Supreme Intellect assures us of the fact, and confides it to our faith; making us partakers in His knowledge, that we may not be ignorant of the great blessing provided for us by His power.

§ 3. *The Eucharistic Sacrifice.*

The Real Presence of Christ's Body and Blood in the elements of the Holy Eucharist is effected with reference to the purposes for which that Sacrament was instituted. The first of these purposes is sacrifice: an aspect of the rite so pro-

minently kept in view by the primitive Church, that it was habitually spoken of by them under such names as Oblation, Sacrifice, Eucharist, Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, Sacrifice of Praise, Reasonable and Unbloody Sacrifice, Sacrifice of our Mediator, Sacrifice of the Altar, Sacrifice of our Ransom, Sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ.[1]

It has been shown in previous pages that the words with which our Lord instituted this Sacrament were of a sacrificial character; and it may also be shown that this character belongs to the very nature of the rite.

1. For, in the first place, the supernatural substance of the Sacrament—the inward part of which has been added to the outward part by the consecration of the latter—is the Body and Blood of a slain Victim, that of Him who offered Himself up as the Lamb of God upon the altar of the Cross. The presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist being, therefore, the presence of His Body and Blood upon our altars, constitutes at once a Sacrifice more true than any of the sacrifices of the old Law. For these sacrifices consisted of victims

[1] Mede's "Christian Sacrifice," p. 355. This great writer adds, "It would be *infinite* to note all the places and authors where and by whom it is thus called."

whose blood could not take away sins, and the offering of them was but typical of the great Sacrifice of the Cross. But the Eucharistic Sacrifice consists of the Body and Blood of that Victim who was slain to take away the sins of the world; and the offering is not a type, but a re-presentation of the one great Sacrifice. So our Lord ordained a new Passover "in the kingdom of God," to take the place of that ancient one whose typical purpose was now fulfilled.

2. And as a sacrificial substance forms the spiritual part of the consecrated elements, so also the object for which the Eucharist was originally ordained, and is perpetually celebrated, constitutes it a Sacrifice in the highest degree. That object is stated by our Lord in the words of institution, "This do, in remembrance of Me"—the word *remembrance* meaning, as has been shown already, a memorial before God. St. Paul states the purpose of the rite in similar language, when he says to the Corinthians, after giving them the revelation he had received of the institution of it, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come."[1] When

[1] 1 Cor. xi. 26. In the 20th verse of the preceding chapter he contrasts the "Table of the Lord," and the "table of

lambs or oxen were sacrificed, under the old dispensation, they showed forth the Lord's death, indeed, as types, yet without any association between the substance of the sacrifice and the substance of the Lamb of God. But in the Holy Eucharist, the Lord's death is shown by means of a Sacrifice in which the substance of the Lord who died is that which is offered—the sacrifice, therefore, not of a type, but of the Antitype, the Body and Blood of Christ. Accordingly St. Paul writes in another Epistle, "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle"[1]—an altar which has superseded that of the old dispensation, a Sacrifice which came to absorb all those that went before, a Divine service of that altar which made the service of the Temple (still going on when St. Paul wrote) a lifeless shadow, inconsistent with Christian reality.

There was, doubtless, a foreshadowing of this Eucharistic Sacrifice, not only in all the slain victims of patriarchal and Mosaic times, but also in that offering which forms so mysterious an episode in the history of Abraham, when "Melchisedec

devils." Heathen sacrifices are referred to in the latter phrase, and the Eucharistic sacrifice in the former.

[1] Heb. xiii. 10.

brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God."[1] As the Psalmist and St. Paul declare of Christ, that He is "a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec,"[2] so may we suppose that the Eucharistic offering of our great High Priest is "after the order of" the offering of the patriarchal "priest of the most high God;" the priesthood and the sacrifice being, however, both elevated above the region of typical things into that of antitypical.

But the clearest foreshadowing of this Sacrifice was given by the last prophet of the Old Testament, whose special office seems to have been to proclaim the coming of Christ, and the passing of the old dispensation into the new. By him the Holy Ghost declared the purpose of God in the familiar words: "From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same My Name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto My Name, and a Pure Offering: for My Name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of Hosts."[3] This prophecy rang in the ears of the early Christians as a household word that had set forth, from the

[1] Gen. xiv. 18. [2] Ps. cx. 4; Heb. vii. 17.
[3] Mal. i. 11.

Apostles' time, the verity of their "Sacrifice of Thanksgiving:" and none ever thought of giving it any other application than to that "Pure Offering" of the spotless Lamb of God, which was made with such definite actions and words in their liturgies, and which their preachers were so constantly setting before them.

Many passages might be brought forward from the primitive Fathers, in which they speak of the Eucharistic Sacrifice; as from St. Irenæus, one generation removed from St. John, who wrote: "This *oblation* the Church alone offers *pure* to the Creator, offering it to Him out of His creation with thanksgiving;" or from St. Cyprian, a few years later, who wrote in his sixty-third Epistle, that "The priest then offers a true and full Sacrifice in the Church to God the Father, when he begins to offer it according as he sees Christ himself offered it." But a better evidence still is the testimony of the primitive liturgies, since in them we hear the official voice of the Church, speaking on the most solemn of all occasions, and speaking to God himself. From three of these the following quotations are taken:—

1. *The Liturgy of St. James, used in Palestine and Mesopotamia.*—"We therefore also, sinners,

remembering His life-giving Passion, His salutary Cross, His Death and Resurrection from the dead on the third day, His Ascension into Heaven, and Session on the right hand of Thee His God and Father, and His glorious and terrible coming again, when He shall come with glory to judge the quick and the dead, and to render to every man according to his works, *offer to Thee, O Lord, this tremendous and unbloody Sacrifice,* beseeching Thee that Thou wouldst not deal with us after our sins, nor reward us according to our iniquities; but according to Thy gentleness and ineffable love, passing by and blotting out the handwriting that is against us, Thy suppliants, wouldst grant us Thy heavenly and eternal gifts, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive the things which Thou, O God, hast prepared for them that love Thee."

2. *The Liturgy of St. Mark, used in Alexandria and the whole of Northern Africa.*—". . . . Our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ, by Whom, rendering thanks to Thee with Himself and the Holy Ghost, *we offer to Thee this reasonable and unbloody Sacrifice,* which all nations offer to Thee, O Lord, from the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same; from the north and from the

south; for Thy Name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense is offered to Thy Name, and a pure offering. O Almighty Lord and Master, King of Heaven, we announcing the death of Thine only-begotten Son our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ O Lord our God, *we have set before Thee Thine own* of Thine own gifts."

3. *The Liturgy of St. Chrysostom, which is substantially the present Liturgy of the Eastern Church.*—"We therefore, remembering this salutary precept, and all that happened on our behalf, the Cross, the Tomb, the Resurrection on the third day, the Ascension into heaven, the Session on the right hand, the second and glorious coming again, in behalf of all, and for all, *we offer Thee Thine own of Thine own*. Moreover, *we offer unto Thee this reasonable and unbloody Sacrifice:* and beseech Thee and pray and supplicate; send down Thy Holy Ghost upon us, and upon these proposed gifts."

With such definite words were the Churches which had received their doctrine direct from the lips of Apostles, accustomed to speak to God of the Eucharistic Sacrifice of our Lord's Body and Blood. In the ancient Church of England similar

words of prayer were used, which had been in use throughout the Western Church at least from the sixth century, since they are found in the Sacramentary of St. Gregory.

4. *The ancient English Liturgy.*—"Wherefore, O Lord, in memory of the same Thy Son, Christ our Lord and God, of His blessed Passion, as well as of His Resurrection from the grave and glorious Ascension into heaven, we Thy servants, and also Thy holy people, offer to Thine illustrious Majesty of Thine own gifts which Thou hast given, a pu✠re offering, an ho✠ly offering, an unde✠filed offering, even the holy bre✠ad of eternal life, and the c✠up of everlasting salvation."[1]

Hence a continuous chain of liturgical evidence exists to show that the Holy Eucharist was always offered to God as a Sacrifice from the days of the Apostles; the substance of that Sacrifice being "the holy bread of eternal life, and the cup of everlasting salvation," of which our Lord had spoken when He said, "My Flesh is meat indeed, and My Blood is drink indeed," and which He gave to the Apostles with the words, "This is My Body: This is my Blood."

[1] These crosses were signed by the celebrant as he spoke the words in which they are placed.

§ 4. *The Manner of offering the Eucharistic Sacrifice.*

Our Lord offered Himself by death once for all upon the Cross: He offers Himself for ever by a continual act of Intercession in heaven. The Eucharistic Sacrifice commemorates that which was offered upon the Cross, and is united with that which is being offered in heaven.

For as Christ was Himself the substance of the Sacrifice offered on the Cross, and also the High Priest who offered it; and as He is now our great High Priest before the Throne of God, and also the "Lamb as it had been slain" in the midst of the Throne: so He, being present in the consecrated elements of the Holy Eucharist, is present there by virtue of His own words, "This is My Body, This is My Blood," and He is Himself the real Consecrator by whose power the miracle of His presence in the elements is effected.

But as the invisible Body and Blood of Christ are made to be present in, with, or under visible signs, so the High Priest who is within the veil, in heaven, works on earth by means of His agent, the priest who stands in the sight of men at the

earthly altar. Hence, as He said to His Apostles "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye *therefore*," making disciples and baptizing, so He said to them, "This do," as signifying that though by His "power" He would give His flesh to be the life of the world, yet they were to co-operate with him by consecrating the visible elements which were to be the vehicles of His presence.

Thus the act of consecration is in itself an act of Sacrifice. In the English Liturgy this is made very plain by the directions to the priest to take the bread and the wine into his hands, to break the bread, and to lay his hand both on it and the cup, "before the people,"[1] while he is saying the words of consecration in front of the altar, before God, standing at their head, and speaking in their name as well as his own.

But the ancient custom of the Church,—the primitive custom, as has been shown by the quotations just made from the liturgies,—was to use a definite "Prayer of Oblation," in which the act of Sacrifice was expressed in words as well as shown by gesture and ceremony. What were the words of oblation in the English Liturgy up to

[1] That is, "coram populo," "in facie ecclesiæ."

the time of the Reformation has been already stated, and the following portion of the Prayer of Consecration of 1549 will show that they were substantially retained in the original Prayer-book:—

"Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, according to the Institution of Thy dearly beloved Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, we Thy humble servants do celebrate and make here before Thy Divine Majesty, with these Thy holy gifts, the memorial which Thy Son hath willed us to make: having in remembrance His blessed Passion, mighty Resurrection, and glorious Ascension, rendering unto Thee most hearty thanks for the innumerable benefits procured unto us by the same; entirely desiring Thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our Sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching Thee to grant, that by the merits and death of Thy Son Jesus Christ" (as in the present Office).

In the subsequent changes that were made during the dangerous times of Puritan domination the ancient order of the Liturgy was broken up, and the Consecration divided into three portions, the Prayer for the Church being placed earlier in the service, and the Prayer of Oblation later: the

earlier portion of the above words being omitted also from the latter. Some of our most learned and holy divines, as Bishops Andrewes and Overall, for instance, were accustomed to use this prayer immediately after the consecration, and before communicating themselves or others; saying the alternative prayer, or thanksgiving, after the Lord's Prayer, when all had communicated. This was probably the custom of many other orthodox clergymen, and its revival is much to be desired for the purpose of representing more clearly the sacrificial character of the Holy Eucharist, and also of bringing into constant use both of two prayers of which one or other is now always omitted.[1]

Verbal oblation of the consecrated elements is not, however, absolutely essential to a true Sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ; and so long as a properly ordained priest uses the proper

[1] "The Prayer of Oblation yet remains in our liturgy, though displaced from its ancient position, and said after Communion; and while any portions of the consecrated elements remain upon the altar (even after a portion has been consumed) the ancient Sacrificial Act of the Church is literally and verbally continued in respect to that portion; supposing that it is not sufficiently continued towards the portion previously consumed, by the more general form of the Prayer of Consecration."—*Annotated Book of Common Prayer*, p. 155.

words of consecration, there must necessarily be a true Sacrifice; which is—even by this *minimum* of ceremonial—brought into union with the Intercessory Sacrifice of Christ in heaven, and is thus presented at the Throne of Grace.

§ 5. *The Benefits of the Eucharistic Sacrifice.*

When our Lord said to Nathanael, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man,"[1] he seems to have indicated that the *ascending* of acts of worship was to precede the *descending* of gifts of grace. Without doubt all acts of worship ought to be offered, in the first instance, because they are due to the majesty of Almighty God.

The primary object, therefore, for which the great Christian Sacrifice is offered at our altars is that God may be thereby honoured, the oblation of Christ's Body and Blood being the very highest act of worship which the Church Militant can offer to Him.

But the oblation is made not alone as an act of

[1] St. John i. 51.

worship. It is also offered as an act of prayer; memorializing God of the needs of His Church, and seeking His blessing by means of this Sacrifice, as they of old sought it by theirs of burnt-offerings. Thus the Eucharist becomes the great Intercessory Act of the Church by which on earth the benefits of Christ's Passion are besought,— of that Passion which Christ himself is pleading in heaven. The manner in which the early Church was accustomed to do this cannot be better shown than by a reproduction of the actual words of a prayer contained in one of the primitive liturgies already quoted, and which was said immediately after the consecration :—

Eucharistic Prayer for the Living and the Departed. From the Liturgy of St. James.[1]

". . . . That they may be to those that partake of them, for remission of sins, and for eternal life, for sanctification of souls and bodies, for bringing forth good works, for the confirmation of Thy holy Catholic Church, which Thou hast founded upon the rock of faith, that the gates of hell may not prevail against it; freeing it from all heresy and scandals, and from them that work wickedness,

1 Neale's "Translations of Primitive Liturgies," p. 52.

and preserving it till the consummation of all things. We offer them also to Thee, O Lord, for Thy holy places which Thou hast glorified by the Divine appearing of Thy Christ, and by the Advent of Thine All-Holy Spirit, especially for the glorious Sion, the mother of all Churches. And for Thy Holy Catholic Apostolic Church throughout the world. Supply it, O Lord, even now, with the plentiful gifts of Thy Holy Ghost. Remember also, O Lord, our holy fathers and brothers in it, and the bishops that in all the world rightly divide the word of Thy truth. Remember also, O Lord, every city and region, and the orthodox that dwell in it, that they may inhabit it with peace and safety. Remember, O Lord, Christians that are voyaging, that are journeying, that are in foreign lands, in bonds and in prison, captives, exiles, in mines, and in tortures, and bitter slavery, our fathers and brethren. Remember, Lord, them that are in sickness or travail, them that are vexed of unclean spirits, that they may speedily be healed and rescued by Thee, O God. Remember, Lord, every Christian soul in tribulation and distress, desiring the pity and succour of Thee, O God and the conversion of the erring. Remember, Lord, our fathers and brethren that labour and minister to us through

Thy holy Name. Remember, Lord, all for good; have pity, Lord, on all; be reconciled to all of us; give peace to the multitude of Thy people; dissipate scandals; put an end to wars; stay the rising up of heresies. Give us Thy peace and Thy love, O God our Saviour, the succour of all the ends of the earth. Remember, Lord, the healthfulness of the air, gentle showers, healthy dews, plenteousness of fruits, the crown of the year of Thy goodness, for the eyes of all wait upon Thee, and Thou givest them their meat in due season; Thou openest Thine hand, and fillest all things living with plenteousness. Remember, Lord, them that bear fruit and do good deeds in Thy holy Churches, and that remember the poor, the widows, the orphans, the stranger, the needy; and all those who have desired us to remember them in our prayers. Furthermore, O Lord, vouchsafe to remember those who have this day brought these oblations to Thy holy altar; and the things for which each brought them, or which he had in his mind: and those whom we have now commemorated before Thee. Remember also, O Lord, according to the multitude of Thy mercy and pities, me Thy humble and unworthy servant; and the deacons that surround Thy holy altar. Grant them

blamelessness of life, preserve their ministry spotless, keep in safety their goings for good, that they may find mercy and grace with all Thy saints that have been pleasing to Thee from one generation to another, since the beginning of the world, our ancestors and fathers, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, teachers, holy persons, and every just spirit made perfect in the faith of Thy Christ. . . . Remember, Lord, the God of the spirits and of all flesh, the orthodox whom we have commemorated, from righteous Abel unto this day. Give them rest there, in the land of the living, in Thy kingdom, in the delight of Paradise, in the bosom of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, our holy fathers, whence pain, sorrow, and groaning is exiled, where the light of Thy countenance looks down, and always shines. And direct, Lord, O Lord, in peace the ends of our lives, so as to be Christian, and well-pleasing to Thee, and blameless; collecting us under the feet of Thine elect, when Thou wilt, and as Thou wilt, only without shame and offence; through Thine only-begotten Son, our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ; for He alone hath appeared on the earth without sin."

In this prayer, it will be observed that there are verbally commended to God the following:—

1. The whole Catholic Church.
2. The clergy in general.
3. The laity in general.
4. The officiating clergy.
5. The departed.

Intercessory prayers of such great length are peculiar to the Eastern Church, and perhaps always were so; but the intercessions themselves are found in all ancient liturgies. We must, therefore, conclude that the whole Church acted on the belief that the Sacrifice of the Holy Eucharist was its great act of prayer, as well as its great act of worship; and that, acting on this belief, the general and particular circumstances of the Church and of individuals were then laid before God. Those who were living in the Church militant were commended to Him, that they might receive grace to persevere, and particular graces for their particular work. Those who were living in the Church in Paradise were commended to Him, that they might have rest in the presence of their Lord.[1]

[1] Prayers for the departed are found in every ancient Liturgy. Two other instances are here given, from liturgies previously referred to.

Liturgy of St. Mark.—"Give rest to the souls of our fathers and brethren that have heretofore slept in the faith of Christ, O Lord our God, remembering our ancestors, fathers, patriarchs,

In our present English Liturgy, these intercessions are represented by the Prayer for the Church which follows the Offertory or oblation of the unconsecrated elements and of the alms. The terms of it are much more general and condensed, but yet very comprehensive; and the departed are still commended to Almighty God, as they ever have been. And such a time is, indeed, the most fitting of all times for offering prayer to our Heavenly Father, whether for ourselves, our living friends, or those who are departed. The Church, as a body, can only speak of its members' needs in general terms; but the clergy can always be ready to commend special persons or objects to God, after the consecration; and private persons can

prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, bishops, holy and just persons, every spirit that has departed in the faith of Christ, and those whom to-day we keep in memory."

Liturgy of St. Chrysostom.—"Further, we pray for the blessed and ever-memorable founders of this holy abode, and for all our fathers and brethren that have fallen asleep before us, and lie here, and the orthodox that lie everywhere." [From the Ectene.] "And, further, we offer to Thee this reasonable service on behalf of those who have departed in the Faith, our ancestors, fathers, . . . and every just spirit made perfect in the Faith." [From the Prayer of Oblation.] "And remember all those that are departed in the hope of the resurrection to eternal life, and give them rest where the light of Thy countenance shines upon them." [From the commemoration of the diptychs of the departed.]

also do the same. Then is the time to pray for unity; for blessings on particular parishes, or special kinds of spiritual work; for grace, on our own behalf or that of others; for peace, light, and refreshment, on behalf of those who have departed from the Church militant.

Nor let it be forgotten that the Eucharistic Sacrifice carries up on its wings to the Throne of Grace all other prayers of the Church, as well as those that are being spoken at the moment; so that the comprehensive supplications of the Litany, or those of Mattins and Evensong, look towards it as their central point, and seek to reach the Intercessor above through His Presence on the altar below. If the sacrifices of the old dispensation were an acceptable vehicle for the prayer of God's people, how much more acceptable must be the PURE OFFERING of the Body and Blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

§ 6. *Holy Communion.*

The first purpose for which the Body and Blood of Christ are caused to be present in the Holy Eucharist being that they may be offered in solemn sacrifice, the second object is that they may be the means of perfecting communion be-

tween God and man. This object is effected by the eating and drinking of that which has been offered in sacrifice, when that which is partaken of by all becomes spiritually assimilated with those who partake of it worthily. As in the Passover of the old Law the typical victim was partaken of as food by those who had offered it as a sacrifice, so in the new Passover the Body and Blood of Christ are first offered to the Father, and then delivered to become the spiritual aliment of souls, according to the institution of our Lord: "Take, eat: This is My Body;" "Drink ye all of it: for This is My Blood."

The times of the Old Testament dispensation abounded with prophecies and prophetic types of a spiritual nourishment by means of bodily food: and since these were written or instituted under the guidance of One whose mind grasped as one present the old dispensation and the new, they are to be regarded as speaking to us in the language of Divine Omniscience, always cognizant of the Reality as well as of the type.

In such language, then, we find the Messiah spoken of as One who was to feed His flock like a shepherd,[1] to gather them from all countries

[1] Isa. xl. 11.

into one fold and bring them to their own land,—the kingdom of God, where He should feed them in a good pasture, and be the one Shepherd over them, and raise up for them a Plant of renown that they should be no more consumed with hunger.[1] Six hundred years before His Advent the Gospel invitation is heard bidding every one that thirsteth come to the Fountain of Life, and instead of spending money for that which is not bread, and labour for that which satisfieth not, to buy without price the milk and honey of the Messiah's kingdom, to eat that which is good and which delights the soul with spiritual fatness.[2] When that new kingdom is spoken of, it is as the land of Him Who giveth food to all flesh,[3] Who hath given meat unto them that fear Him,[4] and whose promise to His Church is, "I will bless her victuals with increase, and will satisfy her poor with bread;"[5]—of Him who satisfies her mouth with good things, and renews her youth in the old age of the world;[6] Who giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might increaseth strength; so that they who "wait upon

[1] Ezek. xxxiv. 12—31.
[2] Isa. lv. 1.
[3] Ps. cxxxvi. 25.
[4] Ps. cxi. 5.
[5] Ps. cxxxii. 15.
[6] Ps. ciii. 5.

Him shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint;"[1]— Who invites those that are simple in holiness, and desirous of finding the true Wisdom, with the words, "Come, eat of My Bread, and drink of the Wine which I have mingled."[2]

Nor is language of this kind of so indefinite a character that it does not naturally apply to the times and circumstances of the Christian Church. On the contrary, it often occurs under associations that make it impossible to apply it in any other way, without watering down the reality of words until their power has vanished. Thus the prophecy, "I will feed the flock of the slaughter, even you, O poor of the flock,"[3] points clearly to the feeding of "the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood,"[4] even He Who in the immediate context says of Himself, "So they weighed for My price thirty pieces of silver."[5] Again, "I will receive the Cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord,"[6] can only be dissociated from the Sacramental Cup of Christ's saving Blood by a distortion of language.

[1] Isa. xl. 31. [2] Prov. ix. 5. [3] Zech. xi. 7.
[4] Acts xx. 28. [5] Zech. xi. 12. [6] Ps. cxvi. 13.

While the Primitive Church set her seal upon the Eucharistic sense of such texts as "O taste and see how gracious the Lord is,"[1] and "My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God,"[2] by incorporating them with that part of the Liturgy at which the communicants received the consecrated elements.

But as if to mark still more definitely the prophetic character of such general expressions, the language of the Old Testament is thickly set with particular references to the spiritual use of the two forms of bodily aliment which our Lord adopted as visible elements of His Sacramental Presence. The Land of Promise is often spoken of as a land of corn and wine when the language used is such as to make it clear that there is a mystical promise and prophecy belonging to the Christian Church, whatever literal reference there may be to the abundance of Palestine.[3] But the same phraseology runs up into a higher order of blessing. The Manna of history becomes the Bread of Heaven[4] and angels' food,[5] in mystical

[1] Ps. xxxiv. 8, used in the Liturgy of St. James.

[2] Ps. xlii. 2, used in the Liturgy of St. Mark.

[3] Gen. xxvii. 28, 37; Deut. xxxiii. 28; Isa. xxxvi. 17; Hosea ii. 8; Ezek. xxxvi. 29.

[4] Ps. cv. 40; Nehem. ix. 15.

[5] Ps. lxxviii. 25.

anticipation of the meaning which Christ would give to it: when the work of the Prince of Peace is predicted, it is with the addition, "and filleth thee with the flour of wheat:"[1] when the spread of the Gospel among the Gentiles is prophesied, it is in the new garden of the Lord that He setteth the hungry, that they may build them a city of God, that they may sow their land with the Corn of Wheat, and plant them vineyards of the True Vine, to yield them fruits of sacramental increase.[2] And thus the language of God teaches us of the feast of fat things, and of the well-refined wine that He was preparing:[3] thus of the joy that sacramental life shall give, when the Corn and the New Wine shall make the young men and the maidens to rejoice:[4] thus of the fulness and abundance of grace to be provided in the kingdom of Christ when men shall be satisfied with the pleasures of His spiritual house, whose is the Fountain of Life;[5] when He shall feed them here with the Bread of Life that He may set them up for ever in His kingdom everlasting.[6]

But it is not only in the language of Holy

[1] Ps. cxlvii. 14. [2] Ps. cvii. 35, 37. [3] Isa. xxv. 6.
[4] Zech. ix. 17. [5] Ps. xxxvi. 8. [6] Ps. xxviii. 9.

Scripture that we find typical foreshadowings of the Bread of Life. It was also prefigured in substance as well as in words; and though such prefigurations may not have made their teaching evident to those in whose time they occurred, to us they are Divine illustrations of a Divine purpose.

Even in the unfallen condition of our human nature a "food of immortality" was provided for it in the "TREE OF LIFE" which stood in the garden of Eden. This appears to have been a kind of natural Sacrament by means of which the wear and tear of man's physical structure was so counteracted that its decay and death became impossible. An essential part, therefore, of the penalty which our first parents brought on themselves and their race was exclusion from access to this Sacrament of life: "lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the Tree of Life, and eat, and live for ever: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden."[1] In subsequent pages of the Old Testament there is a shadow of such a life-giving tree in poetical allusions to the palm, which is so well known for the abundance of fruit it yields, to the "staff of

[1] Gen. iii. 22, 23.

bread," and to the vine. Our Lord himself took up the figure and vitalized it anew by associating it with His own person, when He declared that He is "the True Vine;" and as He seems to have done so with a prophetic reference to the Sacrament which He instituted a few days afterwards, so He made that reference more clear still by speaking of that Sacrament itself as "the Fruit of the Vine."[1] When the Eucharist had been a familiar reality to Christians for more than half a century, we again also hear of this figure, St. John seeing in the midst of the street of the New Jerusalem, and on either side of its river, "the Tree of Life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."[2]

The MANNA given to the children of Israel for their food during the forty years of their sojourn in the wilderness is also one of these substantial anticipations of spiritual aliment. Like the Tree of Life, it was of a supernatural character, although no food of immortality, and its very name was given to it in token of its mystery. Moses called it "the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat," while the Psalmist sings of it as "angels'

[1] St. John xv. 1, & St. Matt. xxvi. 29. [2] Rev. xxii. 2.

food," and "bread of heaven."[1] This also is again spoken of in the Book of the Revelation, where our Lord sends word to the Church of Pergamos, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna."[2]

Several kinds of SACRIFICES, part or the whole of which were to be used also as food by the priests or by the people at whose cost they were offered, were standing types of a spiritual aliment; and there is a special significance of this in the emphatic repetition of a particular expression in the twenty-first and twenty-second chapters of Leviticus, where the priests are six times spoken of as offering "the bread of their God."[3] In the case of animal sacrifices, the flesh was eaten, but the blood was poured out upon the altar; both being, indeed, typical of the great Sacrifice and Sacrament, but the blood having some special connexion with the force or principle of life, and so not to be taken except as the Blood of Him who is of all physical and spiritual life the Giver.[4] A very significant offering also was that of the twelve loaves of shew-bread, or "Bread of the

[1] Ps. lxxviii. 25, cv. 40; Nehem. ix. 15.
[2] Rev. ii. 17.
[3] Lev. xxi. 6, 8, 17, 21, 22; xxii. 25.
[4] 1 Cor. xv. 45.

Presence," which were placed every Sabbath upon the "table of the Lord" in the sanctuary, and eaten on the following Sabbath, in the same place, by the priests. These are typical, perhaps, of the "twelve manner of fruits" of the Apocalyptic Tree of Life.

But even more significant than these was the daily "Meat-offering" of fine flour, oil, and wine, which accompanied that of the lamb at the morning and evening sacrifice, and which is the type of the Eucharistic "Pure Offering" predicted by Malachi.

These, then, are examples of the Divine language and the Divine institutions by which God wrote the mystic tokens of the coming Sacrament in the Scriptures of His ancient people, and the usages of their religious system. But if any saw at all the inner meaning of these mystic tokens, they saw it only "as through a glass, darkly," as all prophecy must be seen until the time of its fulfilment arrives. It was the words and acts of our Blessed Lord that drew aside the veil, and revealed that Substance of which the shadow had been cast before in such a varied and multiform outline.

When by His creative power He provided wine for many guests at a marriage festival, and bread for the feeding of vast multitudes in the wilderness, He was giving visible proof that He was now come in reality to feed His flock like a shepherd, to "bless the victuals of that flock with increase, and to satisfy her poor with bread;" to satisfy with the plenteousness of His house, and to give His people drink of His pleasures as out of the river. He thus revealed so much of Eucharistic mystery as to show that He was the Feeder of His people, and that the two principal elements of His bounty were the wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and bread to strengthen man's heart. At first, indeed, He was silent as to the inner meaning of His acts; but as the time drew on for the institution of the Holy Eucharist, He began to prepare the way for it by showing that the physical marvel of the giving temporary refreshment of bread to five thousand was but a figure of the still greater spiritual marvel of giving His Flesh and Blood to be the Food by which eternal life was to be vouchsafed to a multitude which no man could number. And although no other instance of such ample teaching on the subject is handed down to us, it is easy now to

see that such parables as those of Sowing the WORD, the Marriage Supper,[1] and some other of his Divine utterances, also contained a treasure of Eucharistic revelation that threw light on many things which had been spoken in the language of heaven in the ages gone by.

But our Lord gave the key to unlock all such mysteries, when He revealed Himself to the Apostles as the Good Shepherd feeding His flock with His life-giving Flesh and Blood; and when, a short time afterwards, as He commissioned them (in the person of St. Peter as their representative) to go forth continuing his work, He uttered His commission in the significant words, "Feed My sheep—feed My lambs."[2]

The unambiguous character of our Lord's dogma, "This is My Body—This is My Blood," has already been shown in deducing from it the

[1] Which we cannot fail to associate with the Marriage Supper of the Lamb in Rev. xix. 9.

[2] These memorable words are a significant interpretation of St. Luke xii. 42: "Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his Lord shall make ruler over His household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?" The impression they made on the Church is shown by the words of St. Peter: "Feed the flock of God which is among you" (1 St. Pet. v. 2); and of St. Paul to the elders at Ephesus: "Take heed . . . to feed the church of God" (Acts xx. 28).

truth of the Real Presence in the Eucharist. What has since been brought forward, whether in elucidation of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, or for the purpose of illustrating from Holy Scripture the idea of sacramental food, all goes to establish this unambiguousness of our Lord's words as they regard Communion also. And thus we are led up to the fundamental principle that HOLY COMMUNION IS THE TAKING, EATING, AND DRINKING, OF THE BODY AND BLOOD OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

A simple, trustful, reverent faith loves to rest here, and, if controversies respecting the manner in which this miracle is effected obtrude themselves, to reflect that when the question was asked, "*How* can this Man give us His Flesh to eat?" the reply of the Lord Jesus was an emphatic reiteration of the promise that He would do so, not an explanation of it. Whole libraries of controversial writings exist which are made up of nothing more, in reality, than attempts to answer this sceptical question, and yet it never has been answered, and probably never will be answered. We might, in fact, as well endeavour to find out how the water was turned into wine, as how Christ unites His Body and Blood to the

elements of bread and wine, and then gives them to us as a spiritual aliment. Our only clear ground is that of Christ's own words; and, as has been shown before, there is no alternative between accepting these in their literal sense, or practically rejecting them by the interpolation of some other words.[1]

"Wherefore," in the words of one of the exhortations in our Liturgy, "it is our duty to render most humble and hearty thanks to Almighty God, our heavenly Father, for that He hath given our Saviour Jesus Christ, not only to die for us, but also to be our spiritual food and sustenance in that holy Sacrament."

§ 7. *The Effects of Holy Communion.*

Those who faithfully receive the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ are in some mysterious way incorporated with His Human Nature,

[1] Vast clouds of argument are raised around the words of institution by those who decline to receive them literally; but all such arguments are entirely based on some corruption or other of this text of Holy Scripture. Luther saw this so clearly, even in his time, that in his public discussion with Zwingle he chalked the words "This is My Body" on the velvet cloth of the table at which he sat, and kept to them with inflexible determination.

so that they not only take the "outward sign" and the "inward part"[1] with their bodily organs, but are spiritually assimilated also with the inward part. Such an assimilation is not like that of bodily food, in which the living body assimilates the aliment which it receives; but Christ himself being the source of all life, His Body and Blood vivify those who receive them, and assimilate them to Him. So the Stem of the Vine sends forth its vital fluid into its branches, and by receiving it the branches grow more closely incorporated with the stem. This Eucharistic assimilation perfects the union between Christ and His members which had been first effected by Holy Baptism. "He that eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood," said our Lord, "dwelleth in Me, and I in Him."[2] "The benefit is great," the Church interprets these words, "if with a true penitent heart and lively faith we receive

[1] The "inward part" of the Holy Sacrament being incorporated with "the outward part," all who receive the latter must receive the former also. But (in words of St. Augustine which are quoted in the Twenty-ninth Article of Religion, and in the Catechism of the Council of Trent) "he who dwells not in Christ, and in whom Christ does not dwell, certainly does not spiritually eat His Flesh, though he carnally and visibly presses with his teeth the Sacraments of His Flesh and Blood."

[2] St. John vi. 56.

that Holy Sacrament; (for then we spiritually eat the Flesh of Christ, and drink His Blood; then we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us; we are one with Christ, and Christ with us.)"

Hence the Holy Eucharist is ever counteracting the effect of the Fall. It brings Christians into union with the Human Nature of their Divine Lord, and thus restores to them that union with God which was at first effected by breathing of life into Adam. The Second Adam, the "Life-giving Spirit," gives Himself to men that they may be built up into His Body, and receive of His Life. And this being so, it is not difficult to understand the force of His words, "Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, hath eternal Life: ... He that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me."[1]

Such union with God is the sum and climax of all grace. The Holy Eucharist, therefore, conveys in itself the pardon of sin to those who worthily receive Christ therein; for they are thus brought into union with the Mediator between God and man, whose Person is the very Fount of Recon-

[1] St. John vi. 53, 57.

ciliation. Receiving Him, also, they receive That which is the appropriate remedy for every variety of spiritual disease, the strength for all spiritual weakness, the very "Medicine of Immortality."[1]

No words, then, can exaggerate the power which the Holy Eucharist may exercise over the spiritual natures of its recipients; nor can any state it in stronger language than the few condensed words in which our Lord said, "He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit."[2] He is "the Life," and all spiritual vitality must be intensified by His indwelling: He is the Light, and all spiritual intelligence—knowledge, judgment, faith—must be increased by the same indwelling; He is Love itself, and so by His indwelling the soul of man must be drawn into more and more loving communion with its God.

And this last effect of Eucharistic union with Christ shows that it is also the true bond of *Unity in the Church*. From one Corn of Wheat falling into the ground and dying, that whole field has sprung which is growing for the angels to reap, and to gather into the garner of God. From one Vine-stem springs every branch which has

[1] St. Ignatius to the Ephes. xx. [2] St. John xv. 5.

life and can bear fruit in God's Vineyard. In one Body are all the members of Christ compacted together by sacramental life and union. However distant, therefore, the several ears of corn may be from each other in the Field; however far in opposite directions the branches of the Vine may spread out; however little a member of the Body at one extremity may seem to be associated with one at the other extremity, they are all united to each other by one origin, one life, one incorporation. A true, vital union exists, therefore, between parts of the Church which are separated by distance, political circumstances, unhappy prejudices, and other causes, through the sacramental union of their members with their one common Source of unity and life. And as disunion in the Church sprang up with the decadence of spirituality, so it may be fervently hoped, and no less expected than hoped, that a revival of individual communion with Christ through the Holy Eucharist will be the means of gradually, though perhaps insensibly, reviving the visible corporate unity of the Church.

§ 8. *Frequent Eucharists.*

During the Apostolic age the prominent feature of Divine worship among Christians, on every occasion when it was offered, was the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. The Church was at first composed of Jews, who followed the example of our Lord in continuing to observe the customs of the Law. The Eucharist was the one distinctive Christian addition to those customs; and hence the earlier form of Christian worship was that of (1) continuing "daily with one accord in the Temple," observing the ordinary hours of prayer; and (2) "breaking the Bread at home," offering the new rite in that home of the Church where the Apostles had been gathered together at its Pentecostal birth.[1]

As the Church extended among those who were not Jews, and the more distinctive parts of the Jewish religion were dropped, the psalmody of the old dispensation, and the Old Testament Scriptures, were taken into daily use for Christian worship, and thus a system of "Hours of Prayer"

[1] The Greek expression *κατ' οἶκον* is truly represented by "at home," rather than by "from house to house."

was developed out of the Jewish system, which formed the basis of our present Mattins, Evensong, &c. But the daily celebration of the Eucharist was still continued, though not universally, and is referred to by many early Christian writers; and although such a daily celebration became less common in some periods and some places, the Eucharist has never ceased to be the distinctive rite which has given point to all others, on the Sundays and other holy-days of the Church. Our present system of Epistles and Gospels owes its methodical arrangement originally to St. Jerome, showing that such Sunday and holy-day Eucharists were the received usage in the fourth century; and our Collects offer further evidence of almost as early a date, since the majority of them come from Sacramentaries of the fifth and sixth centuries.

In the Church of England the *rule* before the Reformation and since was that of daily celebration of the Eucharist in cathedrals, and in all other religious corporations; and when Masses were commonly offered for the departed, there were few churches in which the Eucharist was not celebrated day by day for the benefit of some who had died, if not for that of the living. But

the Great Rebellion broke up, among many other customs of the Church, that of daily Eucharists in cathedrals and collegiate churches, and though the *rule* still remains unaltered, the *practice* has never, unhappily, been revived.[1] Sunday and holy-day celebrations were also broken up by the dreadful ungodliness brought in by Puritanism; and its influence on the Church of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was so great as to prevent even their revival, except in some of the cathedrals and a few parish churches, until recent times. Nothing, however, can be more alien from the spirit of the Book of Common Prayer than a Sunday without a celebration of the Holy Eucharist, nor ought it to be omitted in any church whatever.

Such frequency of Eucharists looks to the two-fold object of the Sacrament, Sacrifice and Communion. Since it is the principal act of Divine worship, that from which all others radiate, and from which they derive their force, it should be the regular, and not the exceptional service of the Church, offered up to Almighty God, Sunday after Sunday, and day by day, simply because it is due

[1] There are a few parish churches in which there is a daily celebration.

to Him thus to give Him honour. Every argument that can enforce the necessity of offering any kind of worship at all to God must enforce the necessity of offering that Sacrifice which is so acceptable to Him, as the memorial of Christ's love in redeeming men. Were the object of its institution only that of giving spiritual food to man, there might be many considerations which would have legitimate weight towards a limitation in the frequency of Eucharists; but when, apart from this, it is also an ordinance in which the Church is bound to "give the Lord the honour due unto His Name, and worship the Lord with holy worship," it is plain that the ancient rule of daily Sacrifice is that which is most in accordance with a high theory of Divine worship, and that nothing less than a weekly Sacrifice is justifiable, except on some rare plea of necessity.

Nor must we overlook the fact that when Sacrifice is offered to God, the offering has a reflex action upon the Church. No one for a moment doubts that the burnt-offerings and the incense of the Temple were a means of drawing down God's blessing, or that their wilful omission would have deprived the Jewish Church of that blessing; and if it was so with those sacrifices, how much more

with the Oblation of Christ's Body and Blood! How much more blessing may such a Sacrifice be expected to bring upon the Church, when offered regularly upon her altars—how much more must there be a loss by its omission! "Them that honour Me I will honour, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed."[1] No Church can expect a large measure of the blessing of God which does not offer up to Him with great frequency the Eucharistic Sacrifice. Its omission gives strength to national unspirituality and faithlessness; causes spiritual destitution by banishing the presence of Christ, and makes missions unproductive to a degree which is our shame. Its restoration may be expected to bring the Almighty hand to bear upon all these defects of our religious system—to break asunder the clouds, and bring down a vivifying power upon what is now so often chilled and dull, even where it is not absolutely frozen and dark.

Frequent Eucharists are also to be regarded as a means of frequent Communion. There was, undoubtedly, a habit of daily Communion among many of the early Christians; for St. Cyprian writes: "We pray that this Bread may be given

[1] 1 Sam. ii. 30.

us day by day, lest we who are in Christ, and who daily receive the Eucharist for food of salvation, should, by the admission of any grievous crime"[1] St. Augustine, also, says that "the Sacrament of the unity of the Body and Blood of Christ, in some places every day, in some places at certain intervals of days, is on the Lord's Table prepared, and from the Lord's Table is taken."[2] He also writes elsewhere, "I neither praise nor blame those who receive the Holy Communion daily, but I exhort all to receive it on the Lord's Days."

From many passages in the saintly writers of the early Church it seems, indeed, to have been considered as the highest kind of Christian practice to receive the Holy Communion whenever the Eucharist was celebrated; as, for example, St. Ambrose says: "If as often as the Blood of Christ is poured forth, it is poured forth for the remission of sin, I ought always to receive; I, who am always sinning, ought always to have a medicine." But there is abundant evidence that a much less frequent reception was the general practice, and the time soon came when even St. Augustine's exhortation, that all should receive it on the Lord's

[1] St. Cyprian on the Lord's Prayer, chap. xiii.
[2] St. Augustine on St. John vi. 24.

Day, represented the practice of only a comparatively small number among the multitude of lay Christians. In the mediæval period of the Church, habitual Communion became extremely rare among the laity; and at the Reformation an endeavour was made to impress them with a sense of the necessity and advantage of it, by making the Communion part of the rite more prominent, and by enjoining Communion three times a year on all who have been confirmed.

But those who desire to live the life of Christ will not be content with infrequent Communions; those who "discern the Body of their Lord" will not be content to be only worshippers of His presence. They will seek often to receive the Sacrament of His Body and Blood, that they may receive Himself; and that, receiving Himself, they may by His indwelling be enabled to live His life, and follow with their human footsteps in the path of those which are Divine. "Are we not instructed that it is chiefly and peculiarly by the pure and undiluted grace of Christ, thus from time to time communicated to us through His own direct operation, we are to live and grow as Christians; to receive supplies of Divine strength, notwithstanding all our oppressing infirmities; and, if we

honestly and assiduously improve the heavenly gift thus assured to us, to attain, at length, to the fulness of the Christian character, and to complete fitness for the inheritance of the saints in light."[1]

But, although it is the higher and the better way always to communicate when present at the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, it is necessary to guard against exaggerated notions respecting the necessity of doing so. It must be remembered that as the quantity of the inward part of the Sacrament has no relation to that of the outward part, but that each particle is the Body of Christ, so the building up of the Christian in Christ does not depend upon any quantity of the Body of Christ which, by frequent receiving, he takes into his spiritual nature. There are times to eat, and times to abstain from eating; but there are no times when an ordinary Christian—perhaps even a very sinful Christian—need abstain from kneeling down in the presence of His Lord, when His Body and Blood are offered upon the altar. There may be a sinful obstacle to *worthy receiving*, and yet not a hardened mind; there may be an innocent obstacle to *reverent receiving*, as the un-

[1] Knox's Remains, ii. 281, written in 1826.

avoidable omission of some regular habit, such as fasting; there may be the want of opportunity to be confirmed; or there may, lastly, have been a previous Communion on the same day. In such cases, persons ought not ordinarily to communicate; but there is no reason whatever why they should not remain while others do so, to worship their Lord; and while much good to them may be the result of their doing so, there can ensue no possible harm, so long as there is not a settled determination and habit of choosing the lower rather than the higher way.

Such exaggerated notions ought also to be avoided, out of loving hope towards those who do not often communicate, but who yet, when they do so, come to the altar with a humble and pious desire to place themselves in God's hands, and receive such good gift as He will bestow, though of its nature they have little definite thought or comprehension. Of those who went out to gather manna, they who gathered much had nothing over, while they who gathered little had no lack. When they carried their omers to the field, in obedience to God's command, He rewarded their obedience by making the gathering even of the weakest suffice for their needs as well as that of the

strongest. So many a weak but obedient soul has gone to the altar of his Lord, and there received of His bounty the fulness of that communion with Christ which neither his knowledge nor his faith could have gained for him, but with which the mercy of his Saviour rewards his obedience and his love. "From this view, therefore, of the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist," says a writer previously quoted, "we not only derive an encouragement with respect to ourselves, which, even in our most advanced state in this world, may not be unnecessary, but we also learn to look with increased satisfaction on that occasional concourse of communicants which is excited by the recurrence of our great Christian festivals. Reason unites with charity in assuring us that a sincere religious intention actuates at least a great number of those who approach the Christian altar at those solemn seasons; and it is only on the plainest grounds that we can place a limit to this kindly calculation. May we not, then, humbly believe that, in proportion as there is an opening for it, the Divine influence dispensed through that bread and that cup enters into many an heart which is speculatively unconscious of the blessing it is receiving, and inspires it with holy desires, good

counsels, and just works? The benefits thus conferred may as much escape human observation as the reserved seven thousand in Israel had escaped the observation of the prophet Elijah. But we may well be confident that when the Divine benignity has reserved to itself, in the Christian dispensation, a medium of benediction simply and exclusively its own, the effect is as much beyond man's narrow reckoning as God's ways are higher than man's ways, and His thoughts than man's thoughts." [1]

§ 9. *Eucharistic Ritual.*

While the Church was occupying the position of an adjunct to the Jewish system, there was little or no room for anything but the most essential ritual usages; and it is probable that the Apostles at first celebrated the Holy Eucharist simply with the words of institution, or with the addition to them of the Lord's Prayer. In St. Paul's time we read of lights in the chamber where The breaking of the Bread took place, and these are thought, by an eminent German scholar, to have been placed there in honour of this chief

[1] Knox's Remains, ii. 283, written in 1826.

act of Divine worship. But it was not until after the destruction of the Temple and its ritual that the full glory of a pattern for Christian worship was revealed to St. John, the doctrinal and liturgical Apostle of the Church. To him was entrusted the settlement of the Christian system after its Jewish character had passed away; and to him, doubtless, the principles of Christian ritual were revealed, that he might use them as the basis for that order of Divine worship which has been observed with more or less of local modification throughout the Church.

And the one leading principle of that system is given in the worship of "the Lamb as it had been slain." Around this living Sacrifice, which "liveth, and was dead, and is alive for evermore," there was seen "gathered all the homage of an elaborate ritual. They who worship Him have every one of them harps to offer Him the praise of instrumental music; they have golden vials full of incense, 'which are the prayers of the saints,' even as the angel afterwards had 'given unto him much incense, that he should *offer it with the prayers of the saints* upon the golden altar which was before the Throne.' They sing a new song, mingling the praises of the 'best member that they have' with

that of their instrumental music; and they fall down before the Lamb with the lowliest gesture of their bodies in humble adoration. Let it also be remembered that one of the anthems here sung by the choirs of heaven is that sacred song, 'Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come,' the Eucharistic use of which is traceable in every age of the Church."[1] This leading principle—namely, that of making all the lines of Divine worship converge towards the living Sacrifice, the Lamb of God standing upon the altar before the Throne—is to be traced in every primitive liturgy, and indeed in the liturgy of every orthodox Church throughout the world.[2] Vestments for altar and clergy, instrumental music, hymns, incense, gestures of adoration, have all been adopted with this purpose, that due honour may be rendered to Christ the Object of our worship, whose Body and Blood are present on the altar, being the Body and Blood of Him who is God as well as Man—of Him who is receiving the worship of the Church Triumphant as well as of the Church Militant.

[1] Annotated Book of Common Prayer, p. 49.

[2] For a summary of Eucharistic usages in the primitive and mediæval Church, see Notes A and B at the end of the volume.

It is clear that in all such Eucharistic ritual a distinction can be drawn between that which is essential and that which is not essential. A priest or bishop to celebrate, proper materials for the Sacrament, and the true form of consecration,—these are the bare essentials; and they may be regarded as the pound given by the king to his servant to lay out at usury. To use only such bare essentials would be a loveless rendering of our Lord's command: "This do, in remembrance Me." But, guided by Christ's own revelation, the Church has laid out this gift of her Lord at usury, and renders to Him no mere pound laid up with care in a napkin, but His pound and the interest of her love, His precious gift surrounded by all that can do it honour, and all that can testify to the heartfelt and adoring faith of those into whose hands it has been committed by Him.

Hence our churches are consecrated that they may be places where God's honour may dwell; and made as glorious as skill, wealth, and art can make them that they may be worthy of His presence. Hence altars decorated with beautiful and pure vestments, and altar vessels made of costly metals and jewels; not that they may satisfy the eye of man with what is pleasing and decorous,

but that all material things surrounding and coming into contact with the good gift, may be such as the seamless garment, and the costly spices, and the fine linen which enwrapped His Body while it was visible to those who loved and adored Him. Hence also the vestments of the celebrant and his ministers, that as officers of state put on their purple and fine linen when they attend upon royal personages, so may the servants of our King be fittingly arrayed in the uniform of His service when they minister before His earthly throne. Hence the incense offered at the altars of the Church Militant, as on the "golden altar" of the Church Triumphant; and hence gestures of adoration such as are used by the heavenly host when they sing, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."

Thus does the Church discern the Body of the Lord, and render to it the highest homage that can be given. Material substances have been offered to Him, and having been consecrated by His word, He has vouchsafed to make them the vehicles of His spiritual presence. No longer can faith act towards them as the substances

which alone they were before, but only as towards substances which enshrine His Body and Blood. And as Moses was bidden to be humble and devout when he stood before the visible fire of the bush because it enshrined the invisible Divine Presence, so in the Eucharistic Sacrifice and Communion the Presence of Christ is to be confessed and adored; and if a too eager curiosity say, "I will go and see this great sight, why the bush is not consumed," a Voice is heard in reply, "The ground whereon thou standest is holy ground."

CHAPTER IV.

PENANCE.

THE somewhat ambiguous name of Penance has long been used by theologians to designate one of those "five commonly called Sacraments" which "have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God,"[1] but yet are "such ordinances as may make for the instruction, comfort, and edification of Christ's Church."[2] As a theological word it is not very familiar to the English ear, which is more accustomed to hear that which it designates spoken of under the three separate names of Penitence, Confession, and Absolution; while the word itself has been diverted from its true meaning and applied to the acts of mortification and discipline which the penitent undertakes as an expression of his peni-

[1] Twenty-fifth Article of Religion.
[2] Homily of Common Prayer and Sacraments.

tence and a punishment for his sin. Yet no other single and comprehensive word has ever been substituted for the ancient theological term; and it would be neither convenient nor rational to drop, without cause, a conventional designation so commonly used for what can only otherwise be expressed by a pedantic circumlocution.[1]

Penance has been regarded as a Sacrament by the great majority of scientific theologians, the words and acts of the priests being esteemed the form of the Sacrament; the sins, the penitential words and acts, of the sinner being taken as the remote, and proximate, matter of it. This application of the term "matter" is, however, very different indeed from that which is made of it in the case of Baptism and the Holy Eucharist, and the application of the term Sacrament is conse-

[1] "Penance" is simply the English form of the Latin word "pœnitentia;" and "the Sacrament of Penance" is synonymous with "the Sacrament of Repentance."

The word is twice used in the Commination Service—once in its more modern and restricted sense, and once in the general sense of "repentance." "Brethren, in the primitive Church there was a godly discipline, that at the beginning of Lent, such persons as stood convicted of notorious sin, were put to open *penance, and punished in this world*, that their souls might be saved in the Day of the Lord." "Bewailing and lamenting our sinful life, acknowledging and confessing our offences, and *seeking to bring forth worthy fruits of penance.*"

quently different. It is used, in fact, to signify that Penance is a sacramental ordinance, in which absolution is an outward sign of an inward grace; the outward sign being the form of absolution, the inward grace being the forgiveness of the penitent's sins. But in respect to this outward sign there must also be a restriction of the term "Sacrament" in the case of Penance, for no specific words were ordained by Christ to be used in absolving sinners, nor has one fixed form been unvaryingly used in the Church, as has been the case with the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist.

Penance is, therefore, to be called a Sacrament, rather out of regard to the custom of the Church, than because it strictly answers to the exact definition of a Sacrament. But as the three constituent parts of that which is comprehensively named Penance—that is, Repentance, Confession, and Absolution—are each of Divine institution, the term may be used in deference to custom without any irreverence attaching to such an application of it, or any other impropriety except the want of logical exactness.[1]

[1] If a more exact nomenclature could be adopted, Absolution would be the name rather Penance, the former being truly sacramental in its nature.

§ 1. *Repentance.*

The first step towards forgiveness of sins is Repentance. The heart is moved by Divine goodness to godly sorrow, to a resolution of amendment, and to a desire for reconciliation with God.

Sorrow for sin most frequently begins with fear of its consequences and desire to avoid them. This has received from theologians the name of *Attrition* (a galling friction of the heart by sin), to distinguish it from that more perfect stage of repentance which is called Contrition (a breaking or grinding down of the heart by sorrow for sin), which consists more of pain at the thought of being alienated from God than of fear for having deserved punishment at His hands. This exact anatomy of repentance is not without its use in the practical Christian life, as well as in the theoretical study of it. For we are thus reminded very keenly of the difference between a servile and a loving fear of God; that is, between a fear founded on faith which only sees His justice and trembles at the sight, and a fear founded on faith which beholds His mercy, and is moved by the

sight of it to love Him. The first, so long as it stands alone, is a very imperfect form of repentance, which is not entitled to forgiveness of the sins on account of which the fear is entertained. But it will probably be the first step in every conversion from fixed habits of sin; and there is always hope that it will lead on to the true and loving sorrow of "a broken and a contrite heart" which God will "not despise."

True contrition, then, requires that the sinner should be sorry for his sins because God hates them, as well as because He punishes them. And hence it requires that the sinner should himself hate sin, and especially the sins of which he has been guilty. Where such feelings are aroused towards past sins, they will also be necessarily accompanied by a determination not wilfully to fall again into the same evil habits, or not again to do the same evil acts. Such resolutions of amendment will be more or less determined according as there is a greater or less hatred of the sins to be repented of; and their sincerity at the time when they are formed will be so far an element of future stability that it will lead on to those further stages of penitence which remove the penitent further from the power of evil and the Evil one, and

draw him more within the range of Christ's assisting grace.

Such another stage of penitence is *satisfaction.* Nothing that man can do by himself can make satisfaction to God; for do what he will in the way of almsgiving, suffer what he will by fasting or other mortifications, he must after all be an "unprofitable servant," and dependent on love and mercy for tempering the strict justice of his Judge. Yet a loving penitent will desire humbly to show by acts towards God both his hatred of sin and his love for the Father and Lord to whom he has been again reconciled. His cry will be, "What reward shall I give unto the Lord, for all the benefits that He hath done unto me;"[1] and he will desire rather to break the alabaster box of precious ointment by some lavish act of self-denial, suffering, or service, than to be of the number of those who would say, To what purpose is this waste? Such acts, however lavish, can never, indeed, be accepted by God as satisfaction for sin; but when they are the *fruit* of contrition, they will be accepted as the *evidence* of it. For the remission of the debt incurred by, or the punishment due to sin, we must depend on the

[1] Ps. cxvi. 11.

satisfaction offered by Christ, and on God's sure mercy.

A positive duty falling upon the true penitent is, however, "where he hath done injury or wrong to any man, that he make amends to the uttermost of his power:"[1] and such acts of reparation bear the name of satisfaction under the new dispensation no less truly than they did under the old. Hence in the Liturgy there is an exhortation before Communion, that "if ye shall perceive your offences to be such as are not only against God, but also against your neighbours; then ye shall reconcile yourselves unto them, being ready to make restitution and satisfaction, according to the uttermost of your power, for all injuries and wrongs done by you to any other." Such reparation is sometimes impossible, and the impossibility of it may leave a dark shadow upon the heart even after true repentance. It may be impossible to restore what has been unrighteously taken from another: and there are injuries against the person for which no reparation can be made. In all such cases the desire to satisfy the injured person if it were possible is all that can be reached by the penitent, and doubtless that all is accepted by

[1] Rubric in Office for Visitation of the Sick.

God, though it may not undo the effect of the sin as regards the person sinned against. There are, however, cases in which reparation of injuries is really practicable, and the means of making it should be carefully sought after. The humiliation and self-denial involved in making such reparation will most frequently make it also a severe act of mortification, which will not diminish from its value in the sight of God.

§ 2. *Confession.*

It is impossible that a person should truly repent of their sins without confessing them: and during the course of such a repentance as that sketched out in the last few pages, there must be much confession of sin both to God and man. Indeed two passages alone from Holy Scripture may suffice to show us that confession by man is actually essential to pardon by God. So it is implied by the words of the Psalmist, "I said I will confess my sins unto the Lord: and so Thou forgavest the wickedness of my sin;" and more than implied by the familiar words of St. John, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive our-

[1] Ps. xxxii. 6.

selves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."[1]

Such confession is required to be made by the penitent as an act of homage towards God, and not only for the purpose of unburdening himself by an acknowledgment of his sin. During the time of strict discipline in the early primitive Church, the penitents were obliged to render this homage to God in the presence of the congregation and the clergy; and severe religious discipline was associated with public confession in the case of notorious crimes committed among Christians, which superseded the necessity for "going to law before the unbelievers." When, however, Christianity became the religion of the world, and the tribunals of justice were in the hands of the heathen no longer, crimes of a public kind were adjudicated and punished by the ordinary routine of the law, though in England the bishops sat with the judges of assize until the eleventh century, and thus the duty of the Church to exercise such discipline was still recognised.

It is not historically proveable that this public confession and the discipline which followed

[1] 1 St. John i. 8, 9.

extended to any but public crimes. But it is certain that as the custom died out, or at least became more rarely used,[1] the system of private confession became general. In the later mediæval period, when persons only communicated once or twice a year at the utmost unless they were in danger of death, none were permitted to receive the Blessed Sacrament until they had confessed their sins and received absolution, such confession being, of course, private in all ordinary cases, for neither then nor now would sinners wish to make their confession of sins more public than was required by the law or practice of the Church.[2]

At the Reformation a great effort was made to

[1] It is hardly necessary to say that "open penance" has never entirely died out, even in England, for there are many persons still living who have witnessed and heard the "open penance", and public confession in church, of notorious evil-doers not otherwise amenable to the law.

[2] It is a mistake to suppose that *private*, or "auricular" confession has ever been imposed upon penitents. Priests are prohibited from divulging confessions; and the habit of hearing them in secret has been adopted because it is perfectly clear to every one who knows humon nature, that few persons, if any, would wish to make a thorough and honest confession of their sins otherwise. But there is no Canon of the Church, nor any law whatever, to prohibit penitents from making their confessions in as public a manner as they please. In the mediæval Church of England, confessions were received by the priest, as he sat in a seat open to the view of all.

draw back the laity to more frequent Communion, and to restore to a more just balance in general the several parts of the Christian life. Hence the use of particular, or private, confession before Communion was made voluntary instead of compulsory, and the universal necessity of such private confession ceased to be a part of our Church law. Perhaps, indeed, this desire of the Prayer-book divines to restore frequent Lay Communion led them to say less than they meant on the subject of particular confession, as it evidently did on that of the Eucharistic Sacrifice: and thus many less learned and less pious, but more Puritan clergy (of their own and later times) were induced to misinterpret their intentions, and to suppose that neither had any longer a place in the system of the Church of England. How untrue such a supposition is in respect to the Eucharistic Sacrifice, has been already shown, and it may also be shown in respect to Confession. And as so much of wild assertion has found its way into writings on this subject, it will not be a useless occupation of space to set out at length what has been printed about private or particular confession in the Offices of the Church of England since the Reformation.

1. In "the Order of Communion" which was added to the Latin Service in March, 1547-8, for the purpose of promoting Lay Communion in both kinds, the following words are used in the exhortation which was to be read on the Sunday or Holy-day, "or at least one day," before the Communion was to be administered:—

"And if there be any of you whose conscience is troubled and grieved in any thing, lacking comfort or counsel, let him come to me, or to some other discreet and learned priest, taught in the law of God, and confess and open his sin and grief secretly: that he may receive such ghostly counsel, advice and comfort, that his conscience may be relieved, and that of us, as a minister of God, and of the Church, he may receive comfort and absolution, to the satisfaction of his mind, and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness. Requiring such as shall be satisfied with a general confession, not to be offended with them that do use, to their further satisfying, the auricular and secret confession to the priest; nor those also which think needful or convenient, for the quietness of their own conscience, particularly to open their sins to the priest, to be offended with them that are satisfied with their humble confession to

God, and the general confession to the Church. But in all these things to follow and keep the rule of charity, and every man to be satisfied with his own conscience, not judging other men's minds or acts; whereas he hath no warrant of God's Word for the same."

The "general confession" here referred to is that which is still used in the Communion Service; and which is a modification of one used in the same way in mediæval times.[1]

2. This exhortation was retained in the first English Book of Common Prayer (1549), the only change made being the substitution of the words "consciences" for "acts" at the conclusion.

3. The first rubric of the Communion Service in the Prayer-book of 1549, was in the following words:—"So many as intend to be partakers of the Holy Communion, shall signify their names to the Curate over night, or else in the morning, afore the beginning of Matins, or immediately after." This is taken from the "Consultation" of Hermann, Archbishop of Cologne, the source of some other portions of our services. His words are, "We will that the pastors admit no man to the Lord's

[1] The mediæval form of it is printed in the Annotated Book of Common Prayer, p. 180.

Supper, which hath not first offered himself to them; and after that he hath first made a confession of his sins, being catechized, he receive absolution according to the Lord's word: . . . and for this purpose let the people be called together at even-tide the day before." The original words of the rubric seem to show, therefore, that notice was required to be given by communicants of their intention to communicate, that there might be opportunity given for carrying out the words of the exhortation respecting confession. This is confirmed by the rubric which follows, and which directs the priest to refuse Communion to any of those so giving their names to him who shall be notorious evil-doers until they have done open penance, and made restitution for wrongs, or at least have declared their intention of doing so. Both these rubrics still remain, the first however restricting the notice (since 1661) to "*at least* some time the day before," as if to give still more time for carrying out its original purpose. And a still further confirmation is given by the words of a Canon passed by the Convocation of the Church of Ireland in 1634 when it was presided over by Archbishop Ussher, and which is as follows:—

"The minister of every parish shall the afternoon before the said Administration give warning by tolling of a bell or otherwise, to the intent that if any have any scruple of conscience, or desire the special Ministry of Reconciliation, he may afford it to those that need it. And to this end the people are often to be exhorted to enter into a special examination of the state of their own souls, and finding themselves either extremely dull or much troubled in mind, they do resort to God's ministers to receive from them as well advice and counsel for the quickening of their dead hearts, and the subduing of those corruptions whereunto they have been subject, as the benefit of absolution likewise for the quieting of their consciences by the Power of the Keys which Christ hath committed to His ministers for that purpose."

4. The Exhortation of 1547-8 and 1549 was retained (with some slight verbal alterations and the omission of the last clause) down to the last revision of the Prayer-book, and now appears in the following words, which are substantially those of the original form:—

"And because it is requisite, that no man should come to the Holy Communion, but with a

full trust in God's mercy, and with a quiet conscience; therefore if there be any of you, who by this means cannot quiet his own conscience herein, but requireth further comfort or counsel, let him come to me, or to some other discreet and learned minister of God's Word, and open his grief; that by the ministry of God's holy Word he may receive the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice, to the quieting of his conscience, and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness."

5. In the Office for the Visitation of the Sick, the following rubric was originally inserted: "*Here shall the sick person make a special confession, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter. After which confession the Priest shall absolve him after this form: and the same form of absolution shall be used in all private confessions.*" The latter words were left out in 1552, and in 1661 the rubric was altered into its present form:—

"*Here shall the sick person be moved to make a special confession of his sins, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter. After which confession, the Priest shall absolve him* (*if he humbly and heartily desire it*) *after this sort.*"

The insertion of the words "be moved" plainly

show that the use of special confessions having died out during the persecution of the Church in Cromwell's time, it was now necessary to exhort persons, especially the sick and dying, to make them: and particularly under the circumstances referred to here and in the Communion Service, —trouble of conscience through weighty sins, and imperfection of repentance through want of guidance.

To these passages from the Prayer-book may be added two from the Canons and Homilies.

6. One of the Canons of 1603, the 113th, refers to the presentation of the names and transgressions of evil-doers to the Bishop or his deputy, by the clergy and churchwardens, at every Visitation, and it ends with the following caution and proviso respecting the secrecy to be observed by the clergy as to confessions made to them:—

"Provided always, That if any man confess his secret and hidden sins to the minister, for the unburdening of his conscience, and to receive spiritual consolation and ease of mind from him; we do not any way bind the said minister by this our constitution, but do straitly charge and admonish him, that he do not at any time reveal and make known to any person whatsoever any

crime or offence so committed to his trust and secrecy, (except they be such crimes as by the laws of this realm his own life may be called into question for concealing the same,) under pain of irregularity."

The parenthesis refers to what is called "misprision of treason." In case the confessor incurs danger of punishment for concealing treason revealed to him in confession, he is permitted to save his life by making the treason known. In all other cases to reveal a confession is to incur the ecclesiastical penalty of "irregularity;" that is, incapability of holding any benefice whatever at any time afterwards. The probability of danger through concealment of treason may now be considered as among the things of the past; and hence a clergyman is practically forbidden to reveal anything whatever that has been communicated to him in confession.

7. Lastly, one of the Homilies, that on the subject of Repentance, expressly mentions confession, teaching that "if any do find themselves troubled in conscience, they may repair to their learned curate or pastor, or to some other godly learned man, and show the trouble and doubt of their conscience to them, that they may receive

at their hand the comfortable salve of God's Word."[1]

There would be no difficulty in illustrating these quotations from the authoritative documents of the Church of England by quotations from her most eminent divines, in which it would be shown that they considered the use of private or particular confession very valuable to the soul, and a by no means unusual necessity for good Christian life;[2] but such a large body of authorities would occupy too much space here.

It is quite evident from what has been already quoted that private or particular confession never ceased to form part of the system of the Church of England, and that allegations to the contrary have been made in gross ignorance of documentary evidence on the subject.

There is some reason, on the other hand, in the assertion that particular confession was discouraged at the time of the Reformation, and general confession introduced instead. But both the

[1] "God's Word" is an expression used at the time of the Reformation for any "word" ordained to be used by Divine authority, as the word of absolution or the word of consecration.

[2] This has been done in "The Power of the Priesthood in Absolution, and a few Remarks on Confession; with an Appendix containing Quotations from the most eminent English Divines," by the Rev. William Cooke. (J. H. Parker, 1858.)

general confessions—those at Mattins and Evensong and at Holy Communion—represent forms which were in use during mediæval times, and in themselves they really prove nothing of the kind. They were modified at the time of the Reformation, but they do not furnish any evidence that they were intended generally to supersede private confession. They were, indeed, brought into greater prominence, and probably with the object of restoring general confessions and general absolutions to the Catholic position from which the rigid practice respecting particular confession had rather thrust them aside in the preceding age: but this prominence does not in the least obscure the other phase of the ordinance to the eyes of those who look without partiality or prejudice on the general system of the Church of England. Nor would any really pious and feeling person ever wish to deprive the repenting sinner of the privilege offered to him, that of unburdening his conscience to the minister of God, and of drawing nearer, by that means, to the Throne of Grace. There are pious and feeling persons who may think such a course unnecessary for themselves, but the rigid denial of it to others by any who really know what confession means would at

once show want of feeling, want of love for souls which are seeking salvation, and hence that impiety of which St. John speaks, when he says, "He that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?"[1]

The object of auricular, private, or particular confession is twofold: first, that the penitent may be guided in his repentance; and secondly, that he may receive the benefit of absolution for the sins by sorrow for which he has been led to confession.[2] The latter of these two will be dealt with in the next section; respecting the former it may be said that there are several reasons why the guidance of

[1] 1 St. John iv. 20.

[2] The usual form in which a confession is made is as follows; but this particular form is in no way binding on either clergy or laity:—"In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. I confess to God the Father Almighty, to His only-begotten Son Jesus Christ our Lord, to God the Holy Ghost, and to you, father, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word, and deed, through my fault, through my most grievous fault. [Here comes in a statement of the sins troubling the person's conscience.] For these and all my other sins which I cannot now remember, I humbly beg pardon of Almighty God, and grace to amend; and of you, my father, I ask penance, counsel, and absolution. And therefore I beseech God the Father Almighty, His only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, and God the Holy Ghost, to have mercy upon me, and you, father, to pray for me."

God's ministers should be sought as an aid to repentance.

1. The large majority of persons have but a very imperfect knowledge, beyond the lines of those greater sins which society calls crimes, as to what is and what is not very sinful. The sensitiveness of the Christianized conscience is deadened by contact with an artificial state of social life and of business; and there are multitudes of cases occurring in the course of every active person's life in which, if they honestly acknowledge their true state of mind, they must fairly say, "I really do not know for certain, whether such and such a course has been, or will be, right or wrong." Hence there is a need for the help of those who have made Christian morals their study with a view to the regulation of Christian life; who have studied the characteristics of sin in their broad lines, and in their more intricate complications, as physicians study the diseases to which human nature is subject.

2. It is by no means so easy as persons often suppose, for a sinner to know whether or not he is really penitent. An impulsive mind may be very likely to make mistakes on this point, and put down as true penitence a temporary regret, a few tears, a momentary disgust with sin, which might indeed be

capable of development into repentance, but which, left to itself, is "as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away."[1] But if such first impressions of compunction are brought under the guidance of a wise priest, they may probably lead to that much deeper and more thorough sorrow which characterises a real penitence, and is the sorrow not only of impulse, but "after a godly sort."

3. A person who has a hearty desire to forsake sin and to overcome temptation, may be in great ignorance as to the way and means of doing so. The highly educated mind, or the person trained in habits of thorough self-possession and self-government, may see much absurdity in such ignorance; but these are a mere fraction of the world at large, and the real fact is that there is nothing in which the majority of persons so much need spiritual guidance as in respect to the actual way by which they may forsake sin, and the actual means by which they may get the better of their temptations.

4. There is, too, the familiar but yet Divine saying to be remembered, that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"[2] A strong conviction of this as

[1] Hosea vi. 4. [2] Jer. xvii. 9.

regards their own hearts, will often lead persons to desire the assistance of others in searching out their faults, and bringing them before Him who has said, "I, the Lord, search the heart," and who sees with the Omniscient eye of judgment and condemnation, sins which lie in hidden corners, where they are not visible to the eye of so partial a judge as every one is of his own self.

To all which reasons for the private and particular confession of sins it must be added, that the actual oral acknowledgment of them (which a person will seldom make except to another person) gives them a clear definition which is extremely wholesome for the mind; and that the mere unburdening of the conscience by such disclosures is often an aid, in itself, towards overcoming sins, especially secret sins.

It only remains to add that the Church of England leaves it to the consciences of all whether they will use or not the privilege of private confession which is offered to them. For want of instruction as to its value the practice has been very much disused, and the spiritual advantages of it have been crushed down out of sight by those loud and ignorant controversialists, who talk much, but know little about the really practical parts of

Christianity. On the other hand, the revival of its use in the Church of England has been accompanied by indiscreet zeal on the part of many who have made recent acquaintance with the ordinance; and some sober-minded Churchmen have been set against it by the disproportionate prominence into which indiscreet zeal is apt to bring the objects of its attention. Under these circumstances it is very necessary that the practice should neither be adopted nor rejected without the advice of those whose learning and practical wisdom can be relied on. The Church leaves the consciences of her children free, but at the same time those consciences ought to be *well-informed*, or they cannot be free; for ignorance and prejudice are a very effective bondage, in whatever direction they chain the mind.

§ 3. *Absolution.*

The forgiveness of sins was made an institution of the Christian Church by our Blessed Lord, who first associated it with His human nature, and then delegated the exercise of it, under His authority, to the Apostles.

Absolution is thus a name for the forgiveness of sins by God. Our Lord being Mediator between

God and man, has authority to communicate as man the forgiveness which He bestows as God. Being also the High Priest of the Church, and hence the source from whence all other priests derive their commission, He communicates that forgiveness by the intervention of those who are appointed to do His work on earth.

The association of the Divine prerogative of mercy with our Lord's human nature was very distinctly, and indeed unmistakeably, enunciated by Him. A man "sick of the palsy" had been brought to Him to be healed, and before curing his paralysis, the Good Physician said to him, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." At this direct exercise of the Divine prerogative some of the Scribes who were present at the time were startled, and began "reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this Man thus speak blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God only?" They were right in their reasoning, but, like many reasoners, they did not carry their reasoning far enough; and our Lord supplied the missing part of their argument by a miracle, which proved that the Man of whom they thus spoke was the God who could forgive sins. They had not given any utterance to their thoughts, but He immediately "perceived in His

spirit that they so reasoned within themselves," and answered those thoughts by saying, "Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (He saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all."[1] Thus, He shewed, that as the Divine power was so inherent in His human nature as to effect a bodily cure which could alone be effected by God, so the Divine prerogative also was inherent in His human nature, and the Son of Man could effect that spiritual healing of the soul which also could only be effected by God.

Our Lord's emphatic words "on earth" lead on to the words of the commission in which He delegated His authority to the Apostles when He was on the point of ascending to heaven. As He had twice predicted and promised that He would give,[2] so at last He did give to them the power of

[1] St. Mark ii. 5—12. Compare St. Luke vii. 48—50.

[2] St. Matt. xvi. 19; xviii. 18.

"binding and loosing," the "keys of the kingdom of heaven." "Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."[1] Thus, as they were to minister the virtue of His touch by means of Baptism, and of His presence by means of the Eucharist, so they were to minister the virtue of His all-forgiving word by means of Absolution.

The authority and power which our Lord thus gave to the Apostles was given to them that they might exercise it themselves, and also that they might hand it down to others. Thus our Lord ended all His commissions with the comprehensive promise, "And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."[2] In His eye they represented that ministry which was to do His work "on earth," and therefore He spoke to them not as to twelve men who were shortly to die, but as to that perpetual ministry of which they were the beginning, and which would equally act by

[1] St. John xx. 21—23. [2] St. Matt. xxviii. 20.

delegation from Him "alway, to the end of the world." As this promise, therefore, gives an additional force and corroboration to the commands "This do," and "Teach all nations, baptizing them," so it does to the words, "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." And as by the one authority the clergy of all times have ministered the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist, so by the other they minister the forgiveness of sins; the very words of our Lord being solemnly adopted as the commission of every priest when he is ordained, as is shown in the following extract from our Ordination Services:—

"¶ *When this Prayer is done, the Bishop with the Priests present shall lay their hands severally upon the head of every one that receiveth the Order of Priesthood; the Receivers humbly kneeling upon their knees, and the Bishop saying,*

Receive the Holy Ghost for the Office and Work of a Priest in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands. Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained.

And be thou a faithful Dispenser of the Word of God, and of His holy Sacraments; In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. *Amen.*"

This power of dispensing the absolving Word of God is appointed by the Church of England to be exercised in two forms: the one that of general absolution, or absolution pronounced after a general confession; the other that of particular absolution, or absolution pronounced after a special confession. General confessions, being made by individual persons collected in a body, and all speaking the same words, must of course be framed in comprehensive terms, without verbal mention of the particular sins of which each person may be guilty; and the absolution pronounced must be in corresponding terms.

At Mattins and Evensong, therefore, an "Absolution, or Remission of sins," is appointed to be used, in which the effective words are, "He pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe His holy Gospel."[1]

[1] The latter words refer to the necessity for faith in our Lord's delegation of power to His Ministers—as told us in His holy Gospel—to declare and pronounce to penitents absolution and remission of their sins. See also note [1] on p. 197.

To those who join in this general confession with a true repentance—a repentance not begun and ended at that moment, but only expressed then—and with faith in the absolving power of the ministry, this absolution is an effective sentence of forgiveness. The seed is sown broadcast, and much of it may fall on stony ground or be choked with thorns; but where it falls on good ground, there the blessing of the Sower accompanies it, and it brings forth the fruit of forgiveness.

In the Communion Service a general confession is also used, the terms of which, although of a more deeply penitential tone, are of a similar kind to that of the form used at Mattins and Evensong. The absolution has a much shorter preface, and the absolving words are those of the ancient Church of England:—"Almighty God have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and bring you to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord."

To these words of absolution also the preceding remarks apply; but a higher solemnity is given to them by the fact that they are almost immediately ratified by the Eucharistic presence of the Absolver, and by the sacramental union of the

Mediator with those who receive His Body and Blood.[1]

The special absolution is pronounced after special confessions (whether made by persons in sickness or health) in which the penitent makes a full confession of all the sins that he can remember to have committed since he was last absolved in the same form. The words of this form are as follows:—

"Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to His Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in Him, of His great mercy forgive thee thine offences: And by His authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. *Amen.*"

[1] Two remarkable and touching instances of general absolutions "thrown broadcast" are recorded in Alison's "History of Europe." In one case, on October 17, 1793, a Catholic priest —that is, one of the ancient, not the revolutionized French Church—said Mass by torchlight before the Vendéan army, and concluded by giving absolution to the armed multitude. In the following month another curé, exhorting the Vendéans at Dol to return to the contest after a check, cried out, "Let those who will follow me fall on their knees, and I will give them absolution: if they fall, they will be received into Paradise." About two thousand of the devoted army fell on their knees, received absolution, and returned to the battle with the curé at their head, exclaiming, "God save the king! We are going to Paradise." (Alison's "History of Europe," 3rd edit. ii. 232, 246.)

This is the fullest and most complete absolution that can be given, and is expressly founded on the words of our Lord's commission as used in the Ordination Service. It is hardly necessary to say that, if the priest is convinced that a false or wilfully incomplete confession has been made, he will not give absolution: such a withholding of forgiveness being also an exercise of the authority handed down from our Lord. He cannot, of course, judge without possibility of error, whether the professed penitent is really repentant or not, but he must clearly exercise such discrimination as he can, that God's good gift may not be profaned, and that the person making an untrue confession may not be led away by false hopes of a pardon the virtue of which can only come upon the true penitent.

But if a special confession is faithfully made, then this form of absolution conveys God's pardon to the penitent to the fullest extent in which a person is capable of being pardoned in this life; and if he has been thus absolved at the hour of death, his soul goes forth into the presence of God under the blessed influence of His already declared forgiveness. In any case we are justified in believing that the Son of Man in heaven ratifies that

which has been done on earth in His Name. Fresh sins may revive the old guilt, and so, in a manner, render the absolution null and void; but God gives grace to those whom He pardons, and we may reasonably hope that few true penitents fall so entirely as to produce this result. Rather we may believe that the absolution of a true penitent, as it is equivalent to the Divine words, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," so it is an earnest, to say the least, of the last absolving benediction, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

CHAPTER V.

EXTREME UNCTION.

THE custom of anointing the sick when they are in danger of death is one that has been observed among Christians from the beginning, and it has been regarded as possessing a sacramental character—that is, as conveying grace to the soul through the solemn unction of the body—by a great multitude of holy and deep-thinking men, both in the Eastern and the Western Church. The practice is clearly traceable to the Apostles, and is reasonably supposed to have been ordained by our Lord.

§ 1. *Scriptural Authority for anointing the Sick.*

In the personal ministrations of the Good Physician the healing of the body appears to have been an outward sign of the healing of the soul;

the presence and the Divine power of Him who is the Resurrection and the Life thus giving to the world a foretaste of that final restoration of man's entire nature which will ensue at the consummation of His redeeming work. Such a healing of man's whole nature, in body and soul, was referred to by the words of Isaiah, which our Lord quoted at the opening of His ministrations, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."[1] After these words He immediately applied to Himself the name of a "Physician," and spoke of the healing of lepers, especially of Naaman by Elisha, as if signifying to them that He had come to make His person and presence the fountain-head of sacramental healing; to raise

[1] St. Luke iv. 18, quoted from Isa. lxi. 1. The double application of these words, to body and soul, may be illustrated by our Lord's expressions on other occasions, as when He said, "Unto you, ye *blind* guides" (St. Matt. xxiii. 16), and spoke of a deformed woman as one "whom Satan hath *bound*, lo, these eighteen years" (St. Luke xiii. 16). "Loosing" from bodily infirmities and "loosing" from spiritual infirmities are common expressions in Scripture.

the sick in body and the sick in soul, and thus undo the whole work of the Fall: "Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgiveth all thy sins, and healeth all thine infirmities."[1]

And thus we find our Lord associating the forgiveness of sins with liberation from the bondage of bodily infirmities. "Thy sins be forgiven thee. . . Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house," are the successive words that He addresses to the paralytic at Capernaum.[2] To the impotent man whom He healed at the Pool of Bethesda, with the same words, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk," He also said afterwards, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee;"[3] as if the words which had loosed him from his infirmity had also loosed him from his former sins. To the woman just healed of the issue of blood, He spoke the absolving words, "Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace."[4] And to the man whose cry has rung through all ages, "Son of David, have mercy on me," He gave the twofold assurance of absolution, "Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee."[5] In these, and

[1] Ps. ciii. 2, 3. [2] St. Matt. ix. 2, 6. [3] St. John v. 14.
[4] St. Luke viii. 48. [5] St. Luke xviii. 42.

in other similar cases in which the Good Physician "healed the broken-hearted" of their grievous infirmities, His Divine mercy was extended also to the infirmities of their souls; and the man absolved from the chains of the Evil One is found "sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind,"[1] endued with righteousness, and made joyful with pardon.[2]

It was enough that the Good Physician should speak the word of Divine command only, or touch with His Divine hand, and His servants were made whole. And if He willed to work by other means, it was enough that He who was anointed with the Holy Spirit should vivify the dust of the earth once more by an emanation from Himself, and immediately the eyes of the blind were re-created so that he could wash in Siloam and come again seeing.[3] He also endowed the Apostles with His power so completely that they too were able to raise up the long-paralysed beggar at the gate Beautiful by a word in Christ's name;[4] or to convey His healing power by "handkerchiefs or aprons"[5] from St. Paul, or by the

[1] St. Luke viii. 35.
[2] Ps. cxxxii. 9.
[3] St. John ix. 7.
[4] Acts iii. 7.
[5] Acts xix. 12.

"shadow of Peter passing by."[1] But although "*special* miracles" of healing were thus wrought, our Lord seems to have ordained that *ordinary* miracles of healing should be wrought by means of an outward ceremony. Thus, when He had ordained the twelve Apostles He "sent them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits. . . . And they went out, and preached that men should repent. And cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them."[2] It does not appear that the Jews had any such custom of anointing sick persons; it is quite certain the Apostles would not have invented such a custom for themselves; and therefore we must consider that they used this outward ceremony when exercising miraculous powers of healing by direction of Him who had sent them forth. He Himself had been anointed with the mystical "oil of gladness above His fellows,"[3] that He might "bind up the broken-hearted, and proclaim liberty to the captives,"[4] who were bound by Satan with the chain of bodily as well as of spiritual infirmities. And now He sent forth the Apostles "to give the oil of joy for mourning,"[5] not

[1] Acts v. 15, 16. [2] St. Mark vi. 7, 12, 13.
[3] Ps. xlv. 7; Heb. i. 9. [4] Isa. lxi. 1. [5] Id. 3.

only in a mystical, invisible way, but also by a visible rite as novel as that of Baptism itself.[1] And as the Lord's word or touch healed those only who had faith to be healed (being thus fit subjects for the healing of the soul as well as of the body), so, doubtless, when the Apostles anointed the sick with oil as an outward efficacious sign of bodily healing, the miracle wrought upon the body was contemporaneous with a like miracle wrought upon the soul; and the twofold Divine word went forth with the anointing, "Thy sins be forgiven thee. . . . Arise and walk."

Thus the origin of that rite which is perpetuated by what has received in later days the name of "Extreme Unction" is to be traced up to our Lord Himself; and there is reason to suppose that He ordained it as an outward sign of spiritual no less than of bodily healing.

It is not unreasonable to suppose that as the Apostles thus anointed the sick when they miraculously healed them, so the same ceremony was in customary use by others who exercised the "gifts of healing." About thirty years after the Apostles were chosen and sent forth two and two, St. James speaks of the rite as if explaining what was as well

[1] See on the novelty of the Baptismal rite, page 31.

known among Christians as the singing of psalms and prayer. "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the Church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the Name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him."[1] Here prayer, faith, forgiveness, bodily and spiritual healing, are all associated with this ordinance, as they are with the miracles in which the Good Physician healed the infirmities of those who sought His mercy; and the mention of "elders" (that is, presbyters or priests) seems to show that the ordinance had been worked into the organic system of the Church, as established under Divine command and guidance by the Apostles.[2]

§ 2. *Anointing the Sick in Later Times.*

The usage thus established continued in after ages, and is occasionally referred to by Christian writers of the primitive Church. In the Sacramentary of St. Gregory (A.D. 590) there is an office for anointing the sick, which probably represents—

[1] St. James v. 14, 15.

[2] The "Prayer of Faith" is a comprehensive expression used for the whole rite, including the act of anointing.

as other portions of that Sacramentary are known to do—an office of earlier date; and as late as the seventh century the Venerable Bede mentions the rite as one by the use of which the sick were even then healed. The Greek Church still uses the rite in the sense of its original institution, not delaying its celebration until the sick person is at the point of death, but only until the sickness becomes dangerous and seems likely to withstand ordinary means of cure. In the mediæval Church the practice grew up of delaying the anointing of sick persons until almost the last hour, and hence its name of *Extreme* Unction has come to have this idea attached to it; the recovery of health is, however, declared by the Roman Council of Trent, in the 16th century, to be one of the effects to be looked for from its use.[1]

[1] "The recovery of health, if advantageous to the sick person, is another effect of this Sacrament. Should not this effect follow, however, in these days, it is to be attributed to weakness of faith on the part of those who administer, or those who receive it; not to any defect in the Sacrament. So the Evangelist tells us that our Lord could not work many miracles among His own people, because of their unbelief. It may, however, be very properly said that, inasmuch as the Christian religion has taken deeper root in the minds of men, there is less need of such miracles in our days than there was in the early beginnings of the Church."—*Catech. Trident.* II. vi. 16.

At the time of the Reformation it was declared to be "an evil custom to defer the administration of this Sacrament unto such time as the sick persons be brought by sickness unto extreme peril and jeopardy of life, and be, in manner, in despair to live any longer. . . . For the truth is that the holy Fathers of the Church did neither call this Sacrament the Extreme Unction (that is to say, the last unction) because it should be administered last and after all other Sacraments; neither yet did they ordain that the same should be ministered only when sick men should be brought into the extreme pangs of death; but they did call it by the said name of Extreme Unction, because it is the last in respect of the other inunctions which be ministered before in the other Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation."[1]

§ 3. *Mode of administering Extreme Unction.*

In all the ceremonies of the Church in which Unction has formed part, the chrism or the oil which has been used has always been set apart by

[1] "Institution of a Christian Man." This work also states that there was a superstition respecting Extreme Unction, similar to that which prevents many from making their wills, it being thought to hasten the person's end.

the solemn benediction of a bishop, whether it was to be used by a bishop or a priest. Both the chrism for Baptism and Confirmation, and the oil for Extreme Unction (which was pure oil of olives), were usually set apart by the bishops for the use of their dioceses on Maunday Thursday; that day having been chosen, no doubt, with a view to the Easter Eve baptisms in the primitive Church. This consecration of the oil for the sick is mentioned as early as the year 416, in a letter from St. Innocent to Decentius, bishop of Eugubium; and it may be doubted, whether oil not consecrated by a bishop has ever been habitually used by any portion of the Church, though a provision is made for its consecration by seven priests in the Eastern Church. Perhaps, however, as the episcopal benediction has not any other object than that of the benediction of the water in Holy Baptism, viz. the setting apart of the oil for a sacred purpose, it cannot be considered as absolutely essential.[1]

In the mediæval Church it was the custom to make the sign of the Cross with the sacred oil on the sick person's eyes, ears, nostrils, mouth, and hands (sometimes also on the back and feet), as

[1] In primitive times, the water for Baptism was set apart by the bishop, with a very elaborate ceremonial, on Easter Eve.

the various seats of the senses; a form of words appropriate to the particular sense being used during each anointing. This was probably a mediæval custom only, and not derived from the primitive Church. At the Reformation a simpler mode was adopted, that of making the sign of the cross on the forehead, or else on the breast, of the sick person, after which a prayer was said, and then the 13th Psalm. The following is the Office as printed in the Book of Common Prayer, in the year 1549, at the end of that for the Visitation of the Sick :—

"¶ *If the sick person desire to be anointed, then shall the Priest anoint him upon the forehead or breast only, making the sign of the cross, saying thus,*

As with this visible oil thy body outwardly is anointed; so our heavenly Father, Almighty God, grant of His infinite goodness, that thy soul inwardly may be anointed with the Holy Ghost, who is the Spirit of all strength, comfort, relief, and gladness: and vouchsafe for His great mercy (if it be His blessed will) to restore unto thee thy bodily health, and strength, to serve Him; and send thee release of all thy pains, troubles, and diseases, both

in body and mind. And howsoever His goodness (by His divine and unsearchable providence) shall dispose of thee: we, His unworthy ministers and servants, humbly beseech the Eternal Majesty to do with thee according to the multitude of His innumerable mercies, and to pardon thee all thy sins and offences, committed by all thy bodily senses, passions, and carnal affections: Who also vouchsafe mercifully to grant unto thee ghostly strength by His Holy Spirit, to withstand and overcome all temptations and assaults of thine adversary, that in no wise he prevail against thee, but that thou mayest have perfect victory and triumph against the devil, sin, and death; through Christ our Lord: Who by His death hath overcome the prince of death, and with the Father and the Holy Ghost evermore liveth and reigneth God, world without end. *Amen.*

PSALM xiii. *Usque quo, Domine?*

"1. How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord, for ever: how long wilt Thou hide Thy face from me?

"2. How long shall I seek counsel in my soul, and be so vexed in my heart: how long shall mine enemies triumph over me?

"3. Consider, and hear me, O Lord my God: lighten mine eyes, that I sleep not in death.

"4. Lest mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him: for if I be cast down they that trouble me will rejoice at it.

"5. But my trust is in Thy mercy: and my heart is joyful in Thy salvation.

"6. I will sing of the Lord, because He hath dealt so lovingly with me: yea, I will praise the Name of the Lord most Highest. Glory be, &c."

This office was omitted from the Prayer-book of 1552, but it is the one at present used when Unction is administered by the clergy of the Church of England.

§ 4. *The Purpose of Extreme Unction.*

It has been already shown that when our Blessed Lord sent His Apostles forth at their first ministration they anointed the sick for the purpose of effecting recovery from bodily infirmities; although it is almost certain that spiritual results accompanied the bodily healing. Such cures are not now the ordinary result of Extreme Unction. But it would be too much to say that they never do occur: and it would be altogether unjustifiable to say that they *could* not now occur, since God is, of course, able to effect miraculous cures by means of

an external ceremony at the present day as well as in the days of the Apostles. The fact, however, is sufficiently evident, that many sick persons are daily anointed in various branches of God's Church, but that recovery from sickness is seldom supposed to be a consequence of the rite.

The easiest explanation of this is that there is a deficiency of faith in modern times. But though there are multitudes of *reasoning* unbelievers in modern times, they do but represent the multitudes of *un*reasoning unbelievers in former days; and the multitudes of those who have a simple and warm faith in God forbid the conclusion that there are none with faith strong enough to gain His promised blessing by the use of the ordinance. Perhaps it may be more truly said that the faith of faithful persons is not directed towards this object, and therefore such a result is not effected.

But a more reasonable explanation than that of want of faith is to be found in the fact that the science of healing has been vastly developed during the last few centuries, and that God is blessing the sick with recovery by means of it, instead of by means of the rite of anointing. He works more by means of human intellect, and hence there are what are often called—though without a due

reverence for their Author—"miracles of science," in which the knowledge and skill developed under the Divine blessing are able to effect what could only be effected in ancient times by direct interpositions of Divine power. Some indeed of the miraculous cures effected by our Lord and His Apostles are far beyond the range of these "miracles of science," and perhaps will always remain so; but it is certain, also, that cures are now effected which could formerly have been effected in no other way than by miracles. It should also be remembered that as the progress of medical and surgical science lessens the number of those for whom supernatural recovery from sickness might be expected, so also it still more lessens the number of those whose recovery might be expected to be for the promotion of God's glory or their own ultimate good in the world to come: what are called "premature" deaths by disease being much fewer than formerly.

But while the *miraculous* effects of Unction may thus be supposed ordinarily to have ceased, its *spiritual* effects may certainly be looked for as much in this age as in any other: for God's providence has not lessened the necessity for His assisting and supporting grace to the dying. When the Chris-

tian is looking forth into the valley of the shadow of death, he still trembles at the sight: and he still has to contend with strong temptations and overburdening trials in the hour when he is becoming less and less able by resolution, courage, or strength to bear the burdens, or to struggle with the spiritual foe. Then, if there can be for him any equivalent to the "Go in peace," with which the Good Physician was wont to gladden the ears of those whom He healed, shall he not seek it eagerly? If the rite of anointing may strengthen him for his Christian work of holy dying as Confirmation strengthened him for his work of holy living, let him have all that the Church can give him to that end, that "the Lord" may indeed "raise him up" in His everlasting arms, and support him with Divine consolation in his last great trial.

CHAPTER VI.

ORDINATION.

THE sacramental rite by which men are set apart for the three Holy Orders of the Christian ministry is called "Order" or "Ordination," because it is the means by which the succession of the ministry and the discipline of the mystical Body of Christ is maintained. Its outward sign is the imposition of hands by one or more bishops, its inward grace is that gift of the Holy Spirit in which is bestowed the capacity for consecrating the Blessed Sacrament, for administering absolution, and for transmitting the gift of the Holy Spirit to others by Confirmation and Ordination.

The work of the Christian ministry may be said in general terms to be that of carrying out on earth, by visible and material means, the mediatorial work of our great High Priest, the one and only Mediator between God and Man. "As the Father

hath sent Me," said He, "so send I you." As the Father sent Him to be the Saviour of the world, so does He send the Christian ministry to continue the work of salvation.

§ 1. *A Ministry essential.*

Some form of the ministerial office is to be found among all nations, and at every period of human existence of which we have any detailed history; and it may be considered as an essential feature of human society that there must be agents of God towards men, and agents of men towards God, if it is to be moulded according to the order of Divine Providence.

It cannot be supposed that, even in a state of innocency, every individual son of Adam would have continued to offer up sacrifice (if it was then offered) by and for himself alone. Yet if he had offered it up for others, whether his own family or a larger circle of persons, he would at once have become a minister between them and God. But the Fall made such a ministry all the more necessary, inasmuch as it brought disorder into the spiritual constitution of human nature, rendering such an organization as a ministry essential, if it was to

have any point of union with God, and also making sacrifice not only an offering of Divine worship, but of propitiation. And hence, even the most barbarous and savage nations have some kind of ministerial system, retaining a relic (however distorted by idolatrous practices) of the primæval institution.

That there was such a system in patriarchal times is indicated by the declaration that Melchisedec was "the priest of the Most High God,"[1] but whether the system was of human or Divine organization cannot be certainly inferred. There can, however, be no doubt in the case of the Jewish ministerial system, for full details of its organization by God himself are given to us in the four latter books of the Pentateuch; and a special provision was made, in particular, that the priesthood should form a natural, *i.e.* hereditary, succession, belonging entirely to the one family of Aaron, the first High Priest. And thus God's provision for the ministerial office among a people whose whole system was moulded under His direction, shows that it is a necessary part of human society, and essentially a Divine institution.

[1] Gen. xiv. 18.

§ 2. *The Development of the Christian Ministry.*

The advent of our Lord Jesus Christ changed the whole face of the world's religious life, by restoring a relation between God and man which had been in abeyance from the time of man's expulsion out of Paradise. A new system of spiritual life was originated; new channels of Divine grace were opened; new forms of Divine worship were established; and, to meet the necessities of this change of system, there was established also a new form of ministerial agency between God and man, and between man and God. Hence St. Paul speaks of "the priesthood being changed,"[1] by a derivation of it from Christ (mystically foreshadowed in the Melchisedec of pre-Mosaic times), instead of from Aaron, the fountain-head of the "Levitical priesthood." For Christ gathered up into His own Person the whole true sacrificial, and therefore the whole true sacerdotal system of the world. His sacrifice of Himself was the crown and consummation of all the Levitical and Patriarchal sacrifices, from the time of Abel to that of the Last Supper; and thus, by condensing—as it may be said—into His own Person the virtue of all preceding sacri-

[1] Heb. vii. 12.

fices, He also consummated all the acts of preceding priests, and became the High Priest of the old dispensation by closing it with His own stupendous offering.

By the same central and comprehensive offering of His "full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world," our Lord became also the High Priest of the new dispensation; His sacrifice the one fountain from which all sacerdotal acts were to flow; His priesthood the one personal centre from which the priesthood of every branch of the Church was to diverge.

From our Lord Jesus Christ, therefore, all those who minister the new dispensation must derive their "calling" or "mission." He Himself "glorified not Himself to be an High Priest," but was called, and sent by Him "that said unto Him, Thou art My Son, to-day have I begotten Thee," and "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."[1] And hence our Lord speaks of "Him that *sent* Me" on many occasions;[2] and on the mission thus derived from the supreme Source of all power and

[1] Heb. v. 5, 6.

[2] St. John iv. 34; v. 30, 36; vi. 38, 39; viii. 16, 18, 29.

authority, He bases His own appointment of a ministry, saying, "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you."[1] The Chief Shepherd has the flock of God committed to Him, and all other pastors derive their authority and power (or ministerial ability) from Him.

1. *The Institution of the Christian Ministry by Christ* was, therefore, its natural origin, and every Christian minister of all succeeding ages ought to be able to show a connexion with that Institution as one of the fundamental credentials of his office.

The first indication that the Chief Shepherd was about to institute an order of men to be His deputies and to act in His name, was when He "called unto Him His twelve disciples," and sent them forth as Apostles among "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," to proclaim that the kingdom of heaven —the Church of the new dispensation—was now "at hand." The completeness of the commission given to the Apostles is shown by the fact that He delegated to them a very large share of His own power: "He gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease," saying, "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out

[1] St. John xx. 21.

devils: freely ye have received, freely give."[1] And not only is this shown by the fact of what they were enabled to do, but by the comprehensive words of our Lord, anticipating those of the final commission which He afterwards gave them: "He that receiveth you receiveth Me, and he that receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me."[2]

These words contained, indeed, a truth and principle of so great importance to the world, that our Lord repeated them on several occasions. So when these same Apostles had been disputing among themselves which should be the greatest in the future kingdom, "He took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when He had taken him in His arms, He said unto them, Whosoever shall receive one of such children in My name, receiveth Me: and whosoever shall receive Me, receiveth not Me, but Him that sent Me."[3] "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."[4] So also, after washing their feet as a sign of His preparation of them for their difficult ministerial journey, He again repeated this principle for their

[1] St. Matt. x. 1, 8.
[2] Id. 40.
[3] St. Mark ix. 36, 37.
[4] St. Matt. xviii. 18.

assurance, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth Me; and he that receiveth Me, receiveth Him that sent Me."[1] In a similar manner also He had commissioned "the seventy," giving them "power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy," and telling them also, as He had told the Apostles, "He that heareth you, heareth Me; and he that despiseth you despiseth Me; and he that despiseth Me despiseth Him that sent Me."[2] Thus did He give the earnest of that permanent ministry which He was about to send forth as His deputies throughout the world, and throughout the coming ages.[3]

The actual ordination of the Apostles to their permanent ministry took place on the evening of the first Easter Day, when the disciples were assembled together, probably in the large room where the Passover had begun to be celebrated forty-eight hours before, and where they were gathered on the Day of Pentecost six weeks later. By words and an outward sign our Lord then communicated to

[1] St. John xiii. 20. [2] St. Luke x. 16.

[3] The commission given to the Apostles and to the seventy during our Lord's lifetime was of a temporary nature—"to go before His face:" and of the seventy we hear no more in the New Testament.

them that great fulness of His ministerial authority and power, of which the earnest and promise had already been bestowed on them. He prefaced the ordination with the salutation of peace, and with a statement that the Father's commission to Himself was the ground of the commission He was about to give to them: "Peace be unto you: as My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you."[1] From St. Paul's words, that the Father glorified Christ as High Priest when He said, "Thou art My Son, to-day have I begotten Thee,"[2] we may suppose that he refers to the occasion of our Lord's Baptism, when words of a similar import were spoken by the Father during the descent of the Holy Ghost upon Christ. Thus a great significance is given to these words of our Lord. The Father had sent Him forth on His ministerial work by sending the Holy Spirit upon Him, and now He was sending forth the Apostles in the same manner. For "When He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose soever sins ye remit, they shall be remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they shall be retained."[3] Thus the Apostles received, with their ministerial commission, the communica-

[1] St. John xx. 21. [2] Heb. v. 5. [3] St. John xx. 22, 23.

tion of a capacity derived from our Lord's own Person. He who had breathed the spirit of life into man at his first creation, now breathed upon these twelve men the spirit of ministerial capacity for giving spiritual life to the world, and sent them forth as His deputies, under the influence of that Holy Ghost which had come upon Him with illimitable fulness.[1]

And thus, so far as the ordinary work of the Christian ministry is concerned, the Apostles were fully prepared by our Lord himself before He ascended into heaven, and the way already shown by which His words would be fulfilled, "Lo, I am with you always." For the special work which they had to do in that generation they received a special endowment on the Day of Pentecost.

2. *The Continuation of the Christian Ministry by the Apostles* began, however, even before the Day of Pentecost had endowed them with their *extraordinary* powers, and they showed at once their understanding that they had been constituted by our Lord to be the temporal fountain of ministerial authority and power, by His acts and words on

1 The commissions to offer the Holy Eucharist and to make disciples by baptizing, are spoken of fully under the chapters treating of those two Sacraments.

Easter Day. For during the interval of ten days they took upon themselves to act so completely as the deputies of their Master, that they ordained Matthias to fill up the place of Judas; and one who had thus been set apart by themselves "was numbered with" themselves, that is "with the eleven Apostles" who had been set apart by the great High Priest.

St. Matthias occupied, however, the exceptional position of an Apostle, whose office was of a special, comprehensive, and temporary character. For the development of the ordinary and perpetual ministry of the Church we have to look further.[1]

[1] It may be useful to append the following table of ministerial titles used in the New Testament:—

Greek Word.	Meaning.	Instances of its use.	English Name.
Apostolos	One sent	Gal. i. 1. 1 Pet. i. 1	Apostle.
Episcopos	An overseer	1 Tim. iii. 1.	Bishop.
Angelos	God's messenger	Rev. ii. 1.	
Hiereus	A sacrificer	Heb. iii. 1	Priest.
Presbūteros	An elder	Acts xiv. 23.	
Diaconos	A servant	1 Tim. iii. 10	Deacon.
Leitourgos	A Liturgist	Rom. xv. 16.	Minister.
Euangelistes	A bearer of good news	2 Tim. iv. 5.	Evangelist, or preacher of the Gospel.
Kērūx	A herald	1 Tim. ii. 7.	Preacher.
Prophētes	One who tells God's will	1 Cor. xiv. 37	Prophet.
Didaskalos	A master	Heb. v. 12.	Teacher.
Poimēn	A shepherd	1 Pet. ii. 25.	Pastor.

Our Lord is called an Apostle and Priest in Heb. iii. 1;

The Apostolic office contained within itself the whole ministerial system of the Church, each Apostle being one branch of the True Vine, and having the capacity of sending forth smaller branches, leaves, and fruit. Very shortly, therefore, after the Day of Pentecost, when circumstances had arisen which made such a development of their ministry necessary, they ordained seven other men to act as their ministerial attendants, and relieve them of the lower portions of their ministerial duties. The functions of these seven are not distinctly shown in the New Testament. The cause of their ordination is narrated in the sixth chapter of the Acts, where it is said that certain difficulties having arisen about "the daily ministration" to the widows, the Apostles appointed them over "this business" because it was unreasonable that they themselves "should leave the word of God, and serve tables." But almost immediately after his ordination, Stephen, one of these deacons, is found exercising almost Apostolic power in Jerusalem, and within a short time Philip, another

a Bishop and Pastor in 1 St. Peter ii. 25; a Minister (Liturgist) in Heb. viii. 2; a Deacon in Rom. xv. 8.

The ordination of apostles, bishops, priests, and deacons, is referred to in the New Testament, but the other titles are clearly synonymous designations of one of these offices.

of the seven, was also chosen out by revelation for a very important missionary work. Their office, therefore, is not to be strictly identified with that of deacons as known to the later Church, and must be regarded as a temporary one, specially associated with the persons of the Apostles themselves,[1] and reproduced in the diaconal order which is found existing a few years later.

The first time we find any order of the Christian ministry other than Apostles, in fixed local association with a Church, is in Acts xi. 30, where the "presbyters" of the Church of Jerusalem are named as those to whom the Church of Antioch sent their alms, "by the hands of Barnabas and Saul." But the name has a peculiar significance in this case, though only incidentally mentioned, since it is very shortly after recorded in a similar incidental way that the same two Apostles on their missionary journey through Asia Minor, "ordained them elders in every Church;"[2] while a few verses further on "the Apostles and elders" of Jerusalem are those to whom an appeal is made about the question of

[1] So Paul and Barnabas "had John for their *minister*" (Acts xiii. 5), where the word used (ὑπηρέτης) is nearly the same in signification as *deacon*. Such assistants also, no doubt, were the "helps" (ἀντιλήψεις) of 1 Cor. xii. 28.

[2] Acts xiv. 23.

circumcising Gentile converts.[1] When St. Paul wished to take leave of the Church of Ephesus he sent for the presbyters of that Church to visit him at Miletus, and in his parting exhortation he speaks to them as those whom the Holy Ghost had made overseers over the flock, to feed the Church of God which He had purchased with His own blood;[2] thus distinctly referring to their office as that of pastors and spiritual rulers, not without an allusion to that sacramental feeding which belongs to the administration of the Holy Eucharist. From these indications of the office of "elder" we must conclude that it became part of the settled system of the Church at a very early period of its history; and that it was the habit of the Apostles, wherever they made any number of converts, there to ordain elders, presbyters, or priests,[3] to take the oversight of the flock, and to minister to it in sacred things. Thus what may be called the central portion of the

[1] Acts xv. 2, 4, 6, 22, 23. In the last verse the Apostles, elders, and brethren are named, showing the second to be distinct from the laity.

[2] Acts xx. 23.

[3] The transition from the Greek form of the word Elder or "Presbyter," through *Prester* and *Prest* to Priest; and also of *Episcopos*, through *Biscop* to Bishop; and—by dropping the latter part of the word,—to *Evêque*, is too well known to need more than a passing note.

Apostolic office was separated off, and the Holy Order of the priesthood established.

For some time the Apostles moved about among the Churches that they had founded, overseeing their discipline, ordaining elders, and confirming the newly baptized. But to do this effectually, as the number of the Churches grew, and their distance apart from each other became very great, was beyond the power of their diminishing body. Imprisonments, persecutions, and martyrdoms were also warning them that their own removal from the Church was not far off, and that some provision must be made for the continuance of these vital functions of the permanent ministry of the Church. As early as eight or nine years, therefore, before his death, we find St. Paul writing to Timothy respecting "the office of a bishop,"[1] as if it was already familiar to the Church; and at another time writing to Titus respecting the ordination of priests[2] as one of the duties for which he had been left at Crete by the Apostles. He also exhorts Timothy not to rebuke an elder, but to intreat him as a father,[3] nor to receive untrustworthy accusations against elders, indicating that to Timothy was

[1] 1 Tim. iii. 1. [2] Titus i. 5.
[3] 1 Tim. vi. 1.

entrusted the discipline of the clergy, and that he was to rule them humbly and lovingly: to him, likewise, as to Titus, the Apostle speaks of ordination: "Lay hands suddenly on no man."[1]

At this time, also, deacons are spoken of by St. Paul as a distinct order, occupying a low position, and from which, if they served well, they purchased to themselves a step in the ministry, "a good degree," to a higher order, that doubtless of the priesthood.[2]

Thus even before the death of St. Paul, which happened in the year 67, a ministerial system was developed and already organized to some extent, and in it we can trace the three orders afterwards universal throughout the Church,—those of bishops, priests, and deacons. During the third of a century which subsequently elapsed before the death of St. John, the system of the Christian ministry was being more and more consolidated under his rule; and there is every reason to believe that it was firmly established in its present form before his departure. "It is evident unto all men diligently reading the Holy Scripture, and ancient authors, that from the Apostles' time there have been these Orders of

[1] 1 Tim. v. 22. [2] Id. iii. 8—13.

Ministers in Christ's Church : bishops, priests, and deacons."[1]

3. *The Succession of the Ministry of the Church* so founded by Christ and developed by the Apostles has been kept up through a continuous chain of bishops. About a hundred years after the death of St. John it was said by Irenæus, "We can reckon up the lists of bishops ordained in the Churches from the Apostles up to our time;" and there can be no doubt that it has ever since been the habit of the Church in all ages, and in all parts of the world, to exercise such detailed care in the consecration of bishops that the highest probability (short of demonstration) exists, of every orthodox bishop being as truly a ministerial descendant of our Blessed Lord, as he is a natural descendant of our first parents. This may be illustrated from the episcopate of the Church of England; for there is documentary evidence respecting the consecration of ninety-nine out of every hundred bishops that have occupied Sees in the Church of England for the last eight hundred years; while there is also a large amount of such evidence respecting the bishops of the four centuries preceding the Conquest, and enough respecting the still earlier period

[1] Preface to the Ordination Offices.

to form a table showing the spiritual genealogy of our episcopate from our Lord to the present day.[1] The succession of the priesthood is, of course, contained in that of the episcopate, and consequently every priest of the Church of England can claim to be united by unbroken chains of ministerial descent with those on whom the great High Priest breathed the spirit of ministerial life on the day of His resurrection. Such claims, no doubt, can be supported by sound historical evidence in other Churches of Europe (as they certainly can in those of Italy and France), and in those of the East; but what has been stated is sufficient for illustrating the fact that the *Apostolic Succession* of bishops, priests, and deacons, is as well established an historical fact as any that can be traced back through so large a tract of time.[2]

[1] Such a table, constructed by the present writer, will be found at page 144 of the Bishop of Salisbury's Charge, 1867.

[2] One still occasionally hears doubts expressed as to the consecration of Archbishop Parker, on which that of modern English bishops partly hangs. But all such doubts are traceable to a wicked fable invented by a Romanist schismatic. Documentary evidence shows beyond all cavil, that Parker was formally consecrated at Lambeth Palace by the Bishops of Chichester, Exeter, Hereford, and Bedford, on December 17th, 1559.

§ 3. *Modes of Ordination.*

When our Lord ordained the Apostles He appeared before them in that "Spiritual Body" into which His "Natural Body" had been transfigured by the Resurrection; and the ceremony which He used was that of breathing upon them, one specially significant of the Divine Spirit with which He was endowing them. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth."[1] Their sound was going "out into all lands, and their words into the ends of the world;"[2] in them, therefore, was He setting a tabernacle for the Sun, coming forth as a bridegroom to His Church, out of His chamber of darkness; and He breathed upon them the breath of His risen, spiritual, divine Body, that they might thus receive an emanation from that Person which was to be the Fountain of Life to the Church. "When Thou lettest Thy breath go forth they shall be made; and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth."[3]

But this ceremony belonged to our Blessed Lord's

[1] Ps. xxxiii. 6. [2] Ps. xix. 4, 5: compare with Rom. x. 18.
[3] Ps. civ. 30.

Person, and was not to be adopted by the Apostles as the outward sign of ordination. It may, indeed, be considered not so much as an outward sign as the very Gift itself proceeding from the Divine Giver; and hence it could have no counterpart in any imitative ceremony adopted by those who were merely the ministerial deputies of the Giver. While He was ascending out of their sight our Lord did, however, use a ceremony which the Apostles adopted in ordination: "He lifted up His hands" while He gave them His final benediction; and perhaps the imposition of hands used by the Apostles in transmitting the authority and power given to them by the great High Priest originated in this, His last visible act among them. Of its use in ordination we have several instances recorded in Apostolic times. Thus the seven deacons were "set before the Apostles, and when they had prayed, they *laid their hands* on them."[1] St. Paul and St. Barnabas were to be separated for the work whereunto the Holy Ghost had called them; "and when they had fasted and prayed, and *laid their hands* on them, they sent them away."[2] Timothy is reminded that St. Paul and the presbytery had *laid their hands* upon him;[3] and he is bidden to "*lay hands*

[1] Acts vi. 6. [2] Id. xiii. 3. [3] 1 Tim. iv. 14; 2 Tim. i. 6.

suddenly on no man,"[1] in a manner which shows that this was the established rite for setting men apart for the ministry.

The rite so settled by the Apostles has ever since been carefully observed in the Church, all the primitive Ordination Offices, and those of later date, giving directions for its observance; and many references to it being found in the Fathers, and in the decrees of Councils. It is, therefore, to be considered as the essential outward sign of the sacrament of Order, conveying to the ordained not authority only, but also divine grace for the exercise of their office.

In later times the use of unction and many other ceremonies, some of great and pious significancy, gathered around the central one of imposition of hands; such as the delivery of the ring and pastoral staff to the bishop in token that the Bride of Christ had become united to him, and that he was sent forth to feed the sheep of the Good Shepherd. The paten and chalice, with wine and water, were also given to priests in token of their exalted duty in the consecration of the Holy Eucharist; and the Holy Bible, or the Gospels, were placed on the necks or in the hands of all these orders to indicate

[1] 1 Tim. v. 22.

their subjugation to the yoke of Christ's teaching and commands. These and other significant ceremonies gained an early hold on the Church, varying in different countries, and at different periods; but not being essential portions of the sacrament of Order, it is within the power of every Church to cease using any of them if there is sound reason and necessity for doing so. Thus some ancient customs fell into disuse at and after the Reformation, although more were discontinued by the personal negligence or prejudice of individual bishops, than by the express authority of the Church. The essential part of ordination, the laying on of a bishop's hands, has, however, never fallen into disuse or been neglected; the bishops, priests, and deacons of the Church of England having been as invariably ordained by this rite in later as in earlier centuries.

Such being the essential rite by which the sacrament of Order is conveyed, the distinction of the three degrees of that sacrament is made by the form of words accompanying it. While laying his hands on the head of one to be ordained deacon, the bishop says, "Take thou authority to execute the office of a deacon in the Church of God committed unto thee; In the Name of the

Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. *Amen.*"

The words used in ordaining priests are of a far more solemn character, and include those which were used by our Blessed Lord, when He ordained the holy Apostles :[1]—

"Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a Priest in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the Imposition of our hands. Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained. And be thou a faithful Dispenser of the Word of God, and of His holy Sacraments; In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. *Amen.*"

In ordaining or consecrating bishops a similar form is used, designating the higher office for which the commission is given :[2]—

[1] In ordaining deacons the bishop alone lays on his hands: but in ordaining priests it is customary for some priests also to do so. This is not essential, nor does it add to the validity of the rite, but signifies the assent of the Church to the bishop's act. In the East this is done by giving the kiss of peace to the newly ordained priest.

[2] Three or more bishops are required to consecrate a bishop, but this number is only appointed for the sake of order, and certainty as to validity of succession. A single bishop can validly consecrate another in case of necessity.

"Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a Bishop in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the Imposition of our hands; In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. *Amen.* And remember that thou stir up the grace of God which is given thee by this Imposition of our hands: for God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and love, and soberness."

§ 4. *The General Effects of Ordination.*

It cannot but be supposed that the solemn words and ceremonies used in ordination are fraught with the grace of God to those who interpose no bar to the reception of it; and as the Holy Eucharist forms part of each of the Ordination Offices, there may be a devout confidence that Christ blesses the persons ordained with His Presence as a sanctifying power for their new offices and their new work.

But the effect of ordination is also to place them in a new relation towards God and man, and to give to them, if priests or bishops, new capacities in reference to the invisible world of grace.

1. They become separated from the laity and are made "a special order consecrated unto the service

of the Most High in things wherewith others may not meddle."[1] This is called the "character" received by the sacrament of Order; having received which an ordained man can no more cease to be a clergyman than a baptized man can cease to be a Christian; and hence the character is called "indelible." The act of an ecclesiastical or of a secular judge may inhibit him from the exercise of his office, but the capacity for exercising it still remains, and can never be taken from him.

2. They become the agents of God in reference to His work towards the souls of man. This cannot be more forcibly set forth than in the words of Hooker. "Forasmuch as the Holy Ghost, which our Saviour in His first ordinations gave, doth no less concur with spiritual vocations through all ages, than the Spirit which God derived from Moses to them that assisted him in his government did descend from them to their successors in like authority and place; we have for the least and meanest duties performed by virtue of ministerial power, that to dignify, grace, and authorize them, which no other offices on earth can challenge. Whether we preach, pray, baptize, communicate, condemn, give absolution, or whatsoever, as dis-

1 Hooker's *Ecc. Polity*, V. lxxvii. 2.

posing of God's mysteries, our words, judgments, acts, and deeds, are not ours, but the Holy Ghost's."[1]

Such a delegation of authority is clearly founded on our Lord's words to His ministry as represented by the twelve Apostles: "As My Father hath sent Me, so send I you." "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Such also is the testimony of St. Paul: "He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, Who hath also given unto us His Holy Spirit."[2]

3. They become the agents and representatives of Christians at large, and especially of those in the parish or diocese over which each may be appointed to preside as priest or bishop. At the head of their people, as shepherds at the head of their flocks, they lead and guide as having authority. But they also stand there as being by their very office empowered to speak on behalf of the flock, to offer prayers, oblations, alms, and the Eucharistic Sacrifice, in the name of the congregation of Christ's Church. Hence a bishop or priest standing before the altar, and there offering the Body and Blood of

[1] Hooker's *Ecc. Polity*, V. lxxvii. 8.
[2] 1 Thess. iv. 8.

Christ, is in a position which exactly represents his relation to his people, that of their leader to God's throne of grace.

§ 5. *The particular Functions of each of the Three Holy Orders.*

A few words may be said in conclusion on the duties and capacities assigned to and bestowed on each office of the Christian ministry by the laying on of hands and the commission given to do the work of a bishop, priest, or deacon in the Church of God.

1. *Deacons* were originally ordained, as has been shown in a previous page, to be the personal attendants of the holy Apostles, and to relieve them of the more secular part of their duties. In the later Apostolic age they became an established order, when they appear to have had similar duties assigned them in respect to bishops as they had before fulfilled towards the Apostles.[1] As, however, bishops gradually ceased to be the heads of individual congregations, there were deacons or ministers to the priests who took the place of the

[1] This phase of the office is still represented by the archdeacons.

bishops in particular churches, as well as to the bishops themselves, who now presided over dioceses which contained many parishes.

The highest and principal duty of deacons, after they became an established order, was that of attending on the priests when exercising their sacerdotal office at the altar. This normal idea of the diaconate is still preserved in the Eastern Churches, where the office is one of greater dignity and importance than in the West; and the deacon has special duties assigned to him in the Eastern liturgies of a higher kind than is enjoined in those of European use.

In modern times, at least in the English Church, the diaconate is considered so much in the light of a step to the priesthood, that its original distinctive character has been in some degree lost; but of course this does not alter the real capacities and duties of the office. It is still the chief duty of the deacon to attend on the celebrant that he may assist during the celebration and administration of the Holy Eucharist, and to act as his assistant also in baptizing, preaching, reading of Holy Scriptures and visiting the sick. The office does not give him capacity for consecrating the Holy Eucharist, for absolving penitents, nor for giving the higher

benedictions of the Church. And as the deacon is not competent to give the Matrimonial Benediction (which is one of those referred to), he ought not to celebrate marriages; the validity of any so celebrated being extremely doubtful, while the absence of the Church's full blessing on them is self-evident.

2. *Priests* form the great body of the Christian ministry, and their ministrations make up the ordinary work of the Church, in the offering of Divine worship, and the building up of souls in Christ. By their hands the Church is perpetually offering up the Eucharistic Sacrifice, and Christ is perpetually bestowing the Eucharistic Gift upon His people. Bishops act at the altar by virtue of their priesthood, and the humblest of those who occupy the lower office has equal capacity for this exalted work with the first bishop in Christendom. To the priesthood also is given the Ministry of Reconciliation, the authority to give or retain sins which is stated in the words of ordination, and which was made an essential part of the Apostolic commission by our Lord himself.

These functions comprehend in reality all duties of the sacerdotal office, for all offerings of Divine worship look towards that of the Eucharistic

Sacrifice; all communications of grace reach their climax in the Eucharistic Gift; and all pastoral ministrations are a part of the ministry of reconciliation.

Priests have not, however, any capacity for the transmission of the Holy Spirit, and therefore they can neither confirm nor ordain.[1]

3. *Bishops* combine with the office of the priesthood those portions of the Apostolic office, not contained in the priesthood, which became part of the permanent ministry of the Church. It is their special function to continue the succession of the Christian ministry by ordination of priests and deacons, and by consecration of bishops. The administration of the sacrament of Order belongs, therefore, to their office alone; and hence the Holy Order of bishops is absolutely essential to the existence of a Church.

Confirmation is also a Sacrament which can only be administered by a bishop; and there are some of the higher acts of benediction, such as the con-

[1] Dissenting ministers all derive their origin from priests, deacons, or laymen. Luther, Knox, Brown, and Wesley were priests; Whitfield was a deacon; Calvin was a subdeacon; and minor sects have mostly originated with laymen. Persons so "ordained" cannot administer Eucharistic grace or the forgiveness of sins, any more than ordinary laymen can do so.

secration of churches and grave-yards, which have always been restricted to the episcopal order.

The members of this Order also occupy the highest seats of government and counsel in the Church of God. In spiritual things they rule both the clergy and the laity, and hence they are believed to be endowed with special gifts of spirituality and wisdom, that they may rule as the agents of an All Wise and All Righteous Master of all. So much depending upon the office of a bishop, the place which it occupies in the Christian ministry is clearly that nearest to the Chief Shepherd himself, the Supreme Bishop and High Priest, who is the Fountain of all ministerial capacity, wisdom, and holiness.

"Almighty God, the giver of all good gifts, who of Thy Divine Providence hast appointed divers Orders in Thy Church; Give Thy grace, we humbly beseech Thee, to all those who are called to any office and administration in the same; and so replenish them with the truth of Thy doctrine, and endue them with innocency of life, that they may faithfully serve before Thee, to the glory of Thy great Name, and the benefit of Thy holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*"

CHAPTER VII.

HOLY MATRIMONY.

THE religious rite in which the conjugal union is authoritatively sanctioned and blessed by the sacerdotal agents of God has long been numbered among the Sacraments of the Church, being not only a solemn benediction of a corporeal union, but also the means by which a spiritual union is effected.[1] In our English Marriage Office the form "Those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder" approaches as nearly as possible to a form ordained by our Lord, consisting as it does of His own words; and the universal practice of joining hands appears to have come down from Apostolic times.[2]

[1] Marriage is called a sacrament by St. Ambrose, and often by St. Augustine: but it is probable that they used the term as St. Paul does in Eph. v. 32, with reference to the union effected and the state of life resulting from that union, rather than to the rite itself.

[2] It is mentioned by Gregory Nazienzen in the fourth century.

But the words which express mutual consent have usually been considered by theologians to be the outward sign of the Sacrament of Matrimony; and this is named in our office with "the giving and receiving of a ring, and joining of hands," (in the solemn sentence with which the priest declares the two to be man and wife,) as if all together formed an effective outward sign of the grace which accompanies the rite.

Marriage is, however, to be regarded from three points of view: as a natural institution, a civil contract, and a religious ordinance. As a natural institution it is to be traced up to God as its originator, and therefore any view of it from this point must associate it closely with that from which it is regarded as a religious ordinance. As a civil contract, it is subject to the laws of the country in which it is contracted (whether that country is heathen or Christian), in respect to the civil rights and duties of husband, wife, and children; but as this is a question of secular law, and has nothing to do with the spiritual character of marriage as a Christian institution—that is, as "Holy Matrimony"—it need not be taken into consideration in this place.

§ 1. *The Spiritual Character of Marriage.*

Everything that is *natural* in the circumstances of a being which has a spiritual life and is capable of immortality, has to be regarded from a moral point of view also; and of all living beings on earth men and women alone have their natural constitution mixed up with moral responsibility. Hence marriage, which is of such high importance as a natural institution, has likewise a spiritual character, being the union of two morally responsible and spiritual beings, effected for the purpose of continuing the race by the production of other beings equally responsible, capable of becoming spiritual beings by Holy Baptism, and intended for immortal life by their Almighty Creator.

There are several reasons, therefore, to be deduced from principles lying at the root of Christianity, why marriage must be considered as an institution of a spiritual nature.

1. First of these is the fact that as man was originally created in the Image of God, so that Image is restored to his nature by union with Christ in Holy Baptism. Hence every Christian person has a spiritual side of his nature, which has to be

taken into account now, as much as it was so in Paradise.

2. The Church of God on earth and in heaven is replenished by means of human beings, who have come into existence as the fruit of marriage. The Visible Church comes into being, therefore, by marriage, and from the Visible Church so replenished is formed the Invisible Church, the Crown of the Redeemer, and His glory in the kingdom of heaven. Thus they of whom the Saviour will say, "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given Me,"[1] are they who have thus entered into the Kingdom of Christ, because they first entered into the kingdom of nature; and human marriage has added to the family of God.

3. The mystery of the Incarnation having been foreseen and proposed by God from the foundation of the world, the human nature had a sanctity by anticipation through Him who was to take it, and did take it, when the proper time arrived The mother of all living seems to have thought that she had already become the mother of the Saviour when her first-born came into the world;[2] and the same hope was constantly in the minds of the pious mothers of Israel. And although they were mis-

[1] Isa. viii. 18; Heb. ii. 13. [2] Gen. iv. 1.

taken in supposing that the mother of our Lord would become so by the marriage union, yet was their instinctive feeling a strong shadow of the truth; for it was by a line of marriage four thousand years in length that she herself came into the world, and by her immaculate and miraculous maternity the world was to gain a Saviour.

4. And, lastly, in the eternal foreknowledge of God, marriage was from the first "consecrated to such an excellent mystery" that it was a type of the union between the Bridegroom and the Bride, though only fully revealed as such to the latter ages of mankind. Thus, the language of God used by St. Paul and St. John enables us to interpret the language of God spoken by the prophets; to see that the Spouse of God was no mere poetical figure of speech; and to see that human marriage is a type of which the Divine Marriage of the Lamb is the antitype. "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church."[1] "Come hither, I will shew thee the Bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain,

[1] Eph. v. 31, 32.

and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God."[1]

Marriage is, therefore, in the truest sense a spiritual institution by its very nature, because it is a means for promoting the glory of God in His Church. Though it is the means by which original sin is propagated, it is also the means by which God creates that great multitude which no man can number, a company to which every child will probably be added whose parents bring it up in the nurture and the admonition of the Lord. God has many ministrations of love for which a celibate life is *expedient;* and those who are called to such ministrations might be taking up with a lower state of usefulness if they gave up the celibate life. But there is nothing in Holy Scripture to warrant the belief that the married life is *essentially* a lower state than the celibate life; while there is everything to lead us to the conclusion that it must greatly promote the glory of God in every age, by adding jewels to the Redeemer's crown.

[1] Rev. xxi. 9, 10.

§ 2. *The Religious Celebration of Marriage.*

It seems impossible that marriage should have been from the beginning a spiritual institution, and yet not have been celebrated with religious rites. And Holy Scripture shews that this is as improbable as a matter of history as it seems unlikely as a matter of theory.

The very first institution of marriage was, in reality, a religious rite of the highest kind, in which God joined together the hands of our first parents by bringing the bride to her husband, and with His own mouth pronounced the marriage benediction.[1] The words of Adam also were afterwards adopted by our Lord, and hence are to be regarded, by anticipation, as a Divine declaration: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh;" nor, indeed, could such a prophetic anticipation of the parental and conjugal relations have been conceived, except through Divine foreknowledge.

Among the Patriarchs, and all through the line of the Jewish dispensation, we find ample evidence to show that religious ideas and ceremonies were

[1] Gen. i. 28, ii. 22, v. 2; St. Mark x. 6, 9.

constantly associated with marriage, although it may not be possible to recover any exact account of the latter. But the blessing of God is kept prominently in the foreground as being that which was specially desired and sought, and human laws on the subject were very evidently framed under Divine guidance. The domestic institutions of the Jews were, moreover, so much mixed up with and regulated by religious principles, that although the wedding rites observed by them may appear to have no connexion with the Temple services or the ministrations of the priesthood, there can be no doubt about their being of a highly religious character. In fact, there was no such thing known among the Jews as a mere secular marriage, or a marriage made lawful simply by civil contract. Such a thing was altogether alien to the spirit of Jewish customs, which recognized religious ceremonies in much less important affairs of life, and was not in the least degree likely to omit them in one of so great consequence among all nations, but of more consequence still to that one from which the Messiah was promised than to any other.

But if marriage had never before been regarded as an institution to be inaugurated with religious

ceremonies, the words of our Lord and His Apostles respecting it were of a character to originate such celebrations; and as a matter of fact the Christian idea of marrying "in the Lord,"[1] can be traced back to the primitive Church with a distinctness that leaves no rational doubt of the religious celebration of marriage being an Apostolic institution. The epistle which St. Ignatius, the disciple of St. John, wrote to Polycarp, the "Angel" of the Church of Smyrna, is one of the earliest of Christian writings after the New Testament, and in it he writes: "It is fitting for those who purpose matrimony to accomplish their union with the sanction of their bishop, that their marriage may be in the Lord, and not merely in the flesh. Let all things be done to the honour of God." Tertullian, in the second century, says (writing to his wife), "How can we find words to describe the happiness of that marriage in which the Church joins together, which the Oblation confirms, the benediction seals, the angels proclaim when sealed, and the Father ratifies!" The fourth Council of Carthage (A.D. 398) enjoins that when a bride and bridegroom are presented to a priest for benediction they shall be presented by their

[1] 1 Cor. vii. 39.

parents and friends; an injunction still perpetuated in the giving away of a bride by her father, or by a friend acting as such for the occasion. St. Basil in the same century, writing of the first institution of marriage, calls it a yoke which unites in one those who were two by means of the benediction given; and St. Ambrose, his contemporary for many years, asks respecting mixed marriages, in his nineteenth epistle, "Since marriage must be sanctified by the priest's sanction and blessing, how can that be called a marriage where there is no agreement of faith?" From the fifth century to our own time there is the evidence of prayers used at the celebration of Holy Matrimony, and of more elaborate offices, such as our own; and these, with the preceding quotations, show beyond a doubt, what the habit of Christians has always been in respect to this holy ordinance of Divine institution.

The only substantial difference, indeed, between the ancient mode of celebrating Holy Matrimony and that observed in the modern Church of England is, that in the former the formal engagement, or "promise as to the future" marriage, was made in the form of ceremonial "espousals," the marriage taking place with a second religious service

at a later date; while in the modern English service these two offices are joined together, that of espousals ending with the mutual consent, "I will," and that of marriage beginning with the ancient interrogatory, "Who giveth this woman to be married to this man?"

The affirmations of contracts of marriage before secular persons, and the confirmations of such by them, are therefore an innovation upon the ancient principles of Christians; and, reducing such marriages to the degraded position of mere civil contracts, remove them one degree, and only one, from that of unlicensed cohabitations.

§ 3. *Ecclesiastical Rules respecting Marriage.*

Certain moderate and reasonable restrictions as to the times during which marriages may be celebrated can be traced back to the primitive ages of the Church; and restrictions as to the persons who are to be permitted to marry are traceable to the Divine law given to the Jews.

Restrictions as to Time arose from the most solemn periods of the Christian year having been ever considered as inappropriate for the celebration of the joys of marriage; and Lent is thus

marked so early as the Council of Laodicea, A.D. 365; the decree of that council shewing the habit of the Church elsewhere. At this early period Lent was extended beyond the forty continuous days, by excluding the Sundays, Thursdays, and Saturdays from the number of fasting-days; and thus its commencement was thrown as far back as Septuagesima.[1] Hence, according to the strict habit and common law of the Church, not only Lent, but the three weeks preceding are excepted from the proper seasons for marrying, and Easter week has also been excepted. The "shorter Lent" of Advent, and Christmas week, and from Rogation Sunday to the end of Whitsun week, are the other "close" times.

Thus the times during which the common law of the Church discourages (or, strictly interpreted, forbids) marriages, are as follow:—

1. From Advent Sunday to the sixth day after Epiphany, inclusive.
2. From Septuagesima to the Sunday after Easter, inclusive.
3. From Rogation Sunday to the sixth day after Whitsunday, inclusive.

[1] This was not a universal rule.

By the Canon law,[1] no marriage can be celebrated at any other time of the day than between the hours of eight and twelve, without a special licence or dispensation from the Archbishop of Canterbury. Probably this custom arose from the association of the Marriage Service with the Holy Communion.

Restrictions as to Persons are founded on the divine law of morals as given to the Jews, and on the ancient Canon law of the Church. These restrictions are called the "Impediments of Marriage," and consist mainly of consanguinity, affinity, pre-contract, and divorce.

Consanguinity (or blood-relationship) and affinity (or relationship by marriage) are impediments laid down as such by God in the eighteenth chapter of Leviticus.[2] The different degrees so indicated are elaborately interpreted in a "Table of Kindred and Affinity," which was set forth by the Church of England in 1563, and which is further authorized by the ninety-ninth Canon, as follows: "No person shall marry within the degrees prohibited by the laws of God, and expressed in a table set forth by authority in the year of our

[1] Canon LXII. of the Canons of 1603.
[2] Lev. xviii. 6—18.

Lord God 1563." This Table may be interpreted as follows:—

1. *Relatives whom a Man may not Marry.*

Mother, or Stepmother	of his own or his wife's parents.
Widow of	his father, or father-in-law. ,, uncle. ,, brother. ,, son, or step-son. ,, nephew.
Aunt Sister Daughter, or Niece	of himself or his wife.
Daughter, or Step-daughter	of his own or his wife's children.

2. *Relatives whom a Woman may not Marry.*

Father, or Step-father	of her own, or of her husband's, parents.
Widower of	her mother, or mother-in-law. ,, aunt. ,, sister. ,, daughter, or step-daughter. ,, niece.
Uncle Brother Son, or Nephew	of herself or her husband.
Son, or Step-son	of her own, or of her husband's, children.

The Table itself is often bound up with the Holy Bible and the Prayer-book, and is therefore easily accessible; and it may be added in further explanation of it, that these prohibitions are founded on the two principles (1) that the relationships forbidden by God in the case of either sex are equally forbidden to the other; and (2) that the husband and wife being one flesh, relationships by marriage become, to either of them, blood-relationships.[1] It has been held, moreover, by ecclesiastical lawyers, that illegal alliances in the same degrees entail the same prohibitions; so that, for example, a man is no more allowed to marry the paramour of his deceased brother than he would be allowed to marry her if she had been that brother's lawful widow.

The Canon further provides that, "all marriages so made and contracted shall be adjudged incestuous and unlawful, and consequently shall be dissolved as void from the beginning, and the parties so married shall by course of law be separated."

[1] It may be added, that the marriage of *first cousins* was anciently forbidden, and that it is rightly considered inexpedient (to say the least) by many thoughtful and pious persons. From long observation of such marriages the writer has been led to believe that the children of first-cousins are seldom blessed with offspring.

Other impediments to marriage, according to the rules of the ancient Church, are spiritual affinity, pre-contract, and divorce. The first is that relationship which is established between sponsors and their god-children; and the prohibition of marriage between these seems to date from a very early time. Pre-contract means strictly a solemn espousal, such as used formerly to be celebrated at the time when the engagement to marry at a future day was entered into; but the prohibition by which a person so contracted was not permitted to marry any other cannot be applied to the private "engagement" of modern days, which may reasonably be dissolved by consent. Lastly, the prohibition which restricts divorced persons from marrying during the lifetime of the husband or wife from whom they were divorced, involves a question which will be considered separately.

It only remains to add respecting all impediments clearly defined by the Church that, according to the words of the Marriage Service, they utterly invalidate any marriage celebrated between persons so prohibited from marrying. Of which fact the priest is to give warning in the following words:—

"I require and charge you both, (as ye will

answer at the dreadful day of judgment when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed,) that if either of you know any impediment, why ye may not be lawfully joined together in Matrimony, ye do now confess it. For be ye well assured, that so many as are coupled together otherwise than God's Word doth allow are not joined together by God; neither is their Matrimony lawful."

§ 4. *Christian Marriage indissoluble.*

When Holy Matrimony has been celebrated according to the rules of the Church, and afterwards consummated (as the celebration presupposes that it will be), it can never be dissolved, except by the act of God. "Those whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder," are the words with which the mutual vow to live together till death is ratified; and by them it is distinctly assumed (as in the Ordination services) that the Lord has endowed the Church with authority to use His words in such a sense that they are as binding as if spoken by Himself. No other authority, therefore, than that which has joined together, can separate.[1]

[1] A careful distinction must be made between the authority of the Church and that of its individual agent. The act of the

This indissoluble nature of Holy Matrimony is, however, not only the result of the vow made by the persons contracting, and the sentence pronounced by God's sacerdotal agent: it belongs to it as a spiritual institution. If man and woman had not been endowed with immortal spirits, their conjugal union need only have been subject to mutual inclination and social law. But when baptized persons are united together in Holy Matrimony, the union is an union of the whole of their natures as they are made by the Sacrament which has regenerated them: an union of spiritual persons, not only of natural beings. Hence our Blessed Lord adopted the words of Adam, and that when speaking on the subject of divorce: "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh." And He adds to those words, "So then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."[1] St. Paul uses the same words of Adam as the central idea of a most

latter is called, and is, the act of God, because it is done in obedience to the authority of the corporate body. Had the same corporate body given like authority to a bishop or a priest to dissolve marriages by a solemn ceremony, doubtless the dissolution would have been ratified by God.

[1] St. Mark x. 7—9.

striking exhortation and statement respecting the state of matrimony, in which he uses the clearest language expressive of the permanent union effected in it: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church: for we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church. Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself."[1]

To speak of dissolving such an union as is here indicated is, therefore, much the same as to speak of the dissolution of soul and body. It is a

[1] Eph. v. 25—33.

natural impossibility, except by the act of God. How far marriage which is not Holy Matrimony is less indissoluble than the Paradisiacal and Christian union is a speculation on which we need not enter. It must be concluded that by the Divine law of nature, Holy Matrimony is, of necessity, an union for life, and one which nothing can wholly dissolve during life.

This law was re-imposed by our Lawgiver on two occasions. On the first of these "the Pharisees came unto Him tempting Him, and saying unto Him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" This question our Lord answered by showing that the effect of God's institution of marriage was to make man and wife one flesh, and that what God had thus joined together man must not put asunder. This declaration the Pharisees interpreted as absolutely forbidding divorce, and brought against it the law of Moses. That law is stated in Deuteronomy xxiv. 1, and is to the effect that if a man found, on marrying a wife, that she had been unchaste, he might give her a "bill of divorcement" and "send her out of his house," on which she might "go and be another man's wife;" the second husband having power to punish her ante-nuptial

unchastity by a similar divorcement. Our Lord tells the Pharisees in reply that this law was made only because of the hardness of their hearts, but that "from the beginning," that is, according to the original institution of marriage, "it was not so;" and He repeats His law, "I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery."[1]

Thus our Lord confirmed the permission of the Mosaic law in this particular because of the unforgiving character of the Jewish disposition,—"the hardness of their hearts,"—but He did not extend the permission to any other case than that of ante-nuptial unchastity, or "fornication." And thus He swept away at one stroke all those pretences, falsely grounded on the Mosaic law, under which the Jews had so freely used "bills of divorcement."

On the second occasion our Lord was showing the impossibility of serving God and Mammon, and He ended His words with the distinct law—"Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever

[1] St. Matt. xix. 3—9; St. Mark x. 2—12.

marrieth her that is put away from her husband, committeth adultery."[1] In this case there is no qualification whatever of the general law; and it may well be considered that the concession made to the Jews because of their hard, unforgiving hearts, was not continued in that new dispensation which made forgiveness of injuries so prominent a law.

Even supposing, however, that our Lord's first "except" has the effect of continuing the Mosaic rule as to divorce in the first days of married life, this very exception shows the force of the general rule laid down by our Lord, and we must arrive at the conclusion that divorce in its complete sense—that is, leaving the divorced man and woman as free as if they had not been married—is quite contrary to the Divine law.

The only kind of divorce allowable to Christians is, therefore, that separation by consent, or under the authority of the law, in which (for sufficient causes) the husband and wife live apart but remain unmarried. What St. Paul enjoins on the wife is binding also on the husband: "If she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband."[2] Such a separation leaves a

[1] St. Luke xvi. 18. [2] 1 Cor. vii. 11.

place for repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation, whatever be the cause of it; and a separation open to such reconciliation is the only one consistent with the Christian system.

Thus we see that the sacramental nature of Holy Matrimony, and the positive moral law of Christ respecting it, are both conclusive as to the indissoluble character of Holy Matrimony. The administrator of the secular law may have authority given him for the regulation of the civil rights belonging to those who being man and wife, yet desire to live apart; but he cannot unmarry them, for the Divine sentence overrules all human sentences: "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

APPENDIX.

SACERDOTAL BENEDICTION.

THE universal custom of blessing persons and things is one which has so much analogy with rites of a sacramental nature, that a few words respecting it will not be an inappropriate conclusion to this volume.

Acts of benediction are to be recognised in the earliest historical records we have, and among the customs of all civilized nations: and an institution so general must have had its origin in primæval times either in a direct command of God, or in the unsophisticated religious instinct of the first generations of mankind. This hypothesis is confirmed by the fact that God himself is said to have "blessed" His work of creation, the Sabbath-day, our first parents, and Noah; the words of His blessing being recorded in three out of these four instances.[1]

Immediately after the Deluge we come upon distinct traces of the system of sacerdotal benediction, and thenceforward through those patriarchal ages in which the headship of the tribe included the sacerdotal office.

[1] Gen. i. 22, 28; ii. 3; v. 2; ix. 1.

Thus Noah gives his blessing to his two sons Shem and Japheth, as the new progenitors of mankind: his benediction (as well as his curse of Canaan) having so sacred a character that it is spoken in the spirit of prophecy.[1] Thus Laban is found blessing his sister Rebekah on her marriage with Isaac:[2] and the patriarch himself blesses Jacob with a very formal ceremony that shows how highly the patriarchal benediction was esteemed; as does also Esau's lamentation at the loss of it.[3] Jacob seeks the blessing of the Man with whom he had wrestled, with an earnestness that leads to the same conclusion; and when his own life was drawing to a close, he gave formal benedictions, first to the two sons of Joseph,[4] and afterwards to his own twelve sons.[5]

When the patriarchal period had drawn to a close, the chief head of the Israelites still continued to exercise the same power of giving benedictions. Moses was asked to bless Pharaoh, as if this was a well-known part of his spiritual authority,[6] and the last chapter but one of Deuteronomy is occupied with the formal blessings which he gave to the twelve tribes, after the example of Jacob. In the same manner Joshua gives his authoritative benediction to Caleb,[7] and to the Reubenites;[8] while in after times, David[9] and Solomon[10] both gave similar benedictions in a very public

[1] Gen. ix. 26, 27. [2] Id. xxiv. 60. [3] Id. xxvii. 1—40.
[4] Id. xlviii. 9—20. [5] Id. xlix. 28. [6] Exod. xii. 32.
[7] Josh. xiv. 13. [8] Id. xxii. 6. [9] 2 Sam. vi. 18.
[10] 2 Chron. vi. 3.

and solemn manner, with great formality of ceremonial observances. Thus throughout the Old Testament history we have indications of the principle, that as God himself spoke words of blessing on the first member of His earthly family, so did He authorize his representatives to utter similar benedictions upon those whom they were set over, in the succeeding ages.

§ 1. *Sacerdotal Benediction in pre-Christian times.*

The authority thus belonging to the head of the people was, however, of a national character, and exercised only, it is probable, on great occasions associated with national interests. The blessing given was sacerdotal in its nature, because the priestly office was contained in the patriarchal and, to some extent, in the kingly office. But a form of sacerdotal benediction was ordained by God as an ordinary part of the priest's functions, and this was used as well over individual persons as over numbers on occasions connected only with the usual circumstances of life. The earliest trace of a priestly benediction is in the case of Melchisedek, "the priest of the Most High God," who met Abraham "and blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth: and blessed be the Most High God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand."[1] The way in which St. Paul speaks of this blessing shows that it

[1] Gen. xiv. 19.

was an authoritative one, for he says, "And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better;"[1] which words also seem to show that the sacerdotal blessing which "the priest of the Most High God" could bestow was of a higher spiritual character than that which even Abraham, as patriarch, was authorized to give. The great patriarch was "the less," and the priest "the better," when it came to a matter of purely spiritual functions.

When Aaron and his sons were set apart for the priestly office, the first public sacerdotal acts of the newly consecrated high priest were associated with a benediction: "And Aaron lifted up his hand toward the people, and blessed them, and came down from offering of the sin-offering, and the burnt-offering, and the peace-offerings."[2] But the office to which his family were dedicated is specially distinguished by this function on its first appointment; for Moses, in recounting the history of God's dealings with Israel, speaks of the tribe of Levi as being separated—(1) "to bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord," (2) "to stand before the Lord to minister unto Him," and (3) "to bless in His name:"[3] the two latter functions being assigned to the priest's office in a subsequent part of the same recapitulation.[4] The exact form of benediction to be used by them is also laid down by God: "And the

[1] Heb. vii. 7. It is striking that this first recorded sacerdotal ministration of the peace of God should be by the mouth of one who was "King of Salem, that is, King of Peace."

[2] Lev. ix. 22. [3] Deut. x. 8. [4] Id. xxi. 5.

Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: the Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."[1] In this form it will be observed that the benediction of peace in the name of the Blessed Trinity, is already more than foreshadowed by its remarkable structure. Instances of the public and private use of such benediction by the priests are found in several places of the Holy Bible, as when Eli blessed Elkanah and Hannah,[2] when "the priests the Levites arose and blessed the people" at the dedication of Solomon's Temple,[3] and when Simeon blessed Joseph and the Mother of our Lord.[4]

§ 2. *The effective Nature of Sacerdotal Benediction.*

As the Sacraments are not only signs of grace, but also *effective* signs of it, conveying that which they signify, so the words of the Divine benediction are effective towards that which they promise or declare.

This is self-evident as regards such words actually spoken by God himself; and none can doubt that when He blessed our first parents, and Noah, and said

[1] Num. vi. 22—26. This benediction is used in the Office for the Visitation of the Sick, and in the Commination Service, and that of the Marriage Office is founded on it.

[2] 1 Sam. ii. 20. [3] 2 Chron. xxx. 27. [4] St. Luke ii. 34.

"Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it," His benediction was a word of power as well as authority. But it is also the essential characteristic of all forms of sacerdotal benediction that they must be spoken in the name of God, and under His authority; and, consequently, an effective force is to be expected from them also, provided they are received in faith, that is, without the obstacle of non-belief in their value intervening between them and their intended results.

That the patriarchal benediction was considered to be an efficacious form is evident, (1) from the solemnity with which it was used by Isaac and Jacob; (2) from the pains taken by Rebekah to get it for her beloved child; (3) by Esau's lamentation over the loss of Isaac's benediction; and, (4) from the emphatic words of Isaac, "I have blessed him, yea, and he shall be blessed." Nor can we set aside the evidence given by the subsequent fortunes of the two peoples sprung from Esau and Jacob, since in both cases they exactly followed the course marked out in the benediction. That such ideas respecting the efficacy of authoritative benedictions were very widely spread, may also be seen from the message of Balak to Balaam in a later age, "For I wot that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed."[1]

But we are not left to such evidence alone for the proof of this principle, God himself having distinctly

[1] Num. xxii. 6.

enunciated it when He formalized the rite of Benediction in the Jewish ritual. The form itself has been given in the last section; but to the words there set down the Lord added, "And they shall put My Name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them."[1] Nothing could more conclusively show that God thus declared His ratification of the sacerdotal benediction spoken by the Jewish priests. In His Name, thrice uttered as a token of the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity, His agents were to bless the children of Israel, and thus to "put His Name upon them." In that most holy Name they were to bless them with the promise of His creative providence, of His light and grace, of His comfort and peace; and that promise He would ratify by bestowing on all faithful hearts the blessings thus declared,—"and I will bless them."

The same truth is not less forcibly declared in the record of the dedication of Solomon's Temple: "Then the priests the Levites arose and blessed the people: and their voice was heard, and their prayer came up to His holy dwelling-place, even unto heaven."[2]

§ 3. *Sacerdotal Benediction in the Christian Church.*

Such having been the authority with which God empowered His agents to bless in His Name under the old dispensation, we may be quite sure that He would not withdraw the power or lessen its efficacy under

[1] Num. vi. 27. [2] 2 Chron. xxx. 27.

the new. For "if the ministration of death . . . was glorious, . . . how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory."[1] Man is as much in need of the blessing of God now as ever he was; God has not lessened the force of His blessing now that Christ has come; His ministers are as much His agents now as they were under the old dispensation; and He ratifies the acts of Christian priests as He did those of the sons of Aaron. As therefore Aaron, when he was made high priest of the old dispensation, "lifted up his hand toward the people, and blessed them,"[2] and henceforth his sons the priests ever did the same, so Christ, when He ascended to heaven as our eternal high priest, "lifted up His hands, and blessed" His little flock;[3] and from that time His ministerial agents of the new dispensation have been ever dispensing the peace of God, in the Name of the true Melchisedek, the Prince of Peace.

The first time our Lord indicated to His Apostles that they were to use acts of benediction, was when He sent them forth on their temporary mission during the time of His own ministrations. It was no common courtesy with which they were to salute every house that they visited, but a benediction of a sacramental character, the efficacy of which depended on His invisible presence: "Into whatsoever house ye enter,

[1] 2 Cor. iii. 7—9. [2] Lev. ix. 22. [3] St. Luke xxiv. 50.

first say, Peace be to this house. And if the Son of Peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again."[1]

But when He was giving them instructions as to their permanent work, our Lord gave a still greater significance to this direction, by identifying their benediction with His own: "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you."[2] This significance was heightened by His Easter salutation, "Peace be unto you;"[3] and when "He lifted up His hands, and blessed them"[4] as He went up into heaven, He gave to His Church that which He had promised, and commissioned His agents as God had commissioned His priests under the old dispensation to put His Name upon the children of Israel that He might bless them.

From our Blessed Lord, then, the fountain of all grace, is derived the grace which accompanies acts of sacerdotal benediction; and hence in His Name all such acts are performed. The apostolic use of them is illustrated by many instances in the Epistles, St. Paul concluding each of his with such a benediction; St. Peter closing his first Epistle with one; and St. John using one at the end of the Revelation which forms a fitting termination to the Holy Bible.

The forms thus used are substantially the two which

[1] St. Luke x. 5. The clergy are directed by the Prayer-book to give this salutation in their visits to the sick.

[2] St. John xiv. 27.

[3] Id. xx. 19.

[4] St. Luke xxiv. 50.

are familiar to us at the end of Holy Communion, and of the ordinary public offices, the first being usually called "The Peace," and the second "The Grace," from the words with which they begin. Thus, St. Paul gives the first half of the former form in his Epistle to the Philippians, "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus;"[1] and St. Peter in the words, "Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus."[2] The second is used by St. Paul at the end of all his Epistles, and in its fullest form is, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all."[3] The latter portion of "The Peace," that is, the blessing in the Name of the Holy Trinity, is not found in Holy Scripture, but has been used from Anglo-Saxon times in the Church of England. It stands by itself at the end of the Confirmation service, and is the ordinary form in which benedictions are given. Two other, special forms, are to be found in the Marriage service; and the ancient Levitical form, as already mentioned, in the Visitation of the Sick, and the Commination.

The general principles which have been deduced from

[1] Phil. iv. 7. [2] 1 St. Peter v. 14.

[3] 2 Cor. xiii. 14. It is supposed by some learned writers that this benediction was taken by St. Paul from a liturgy which existed in the Christian Church before the New Testament was written. It has a place in the Liturgy of St. James, which dates from very early times.

Holy Scripture show that these several forms of sacerdotal benediction are means for the ministration of the Divine blessing. As the forms of absolution are effective for the forgiveness of sins, so are those of benediction for the conveyance of comfort, peace, and protection from God. All that is required is, that those over whom they are spoken, whether in public or in private, bow themselves down before God with humble minds, desirous of, and believing in the effective operation of His blessing.

§ 4. *Benediction of Places.*

At almost as early a page of Scripture history as we meet with the blessing of persons, we meet also with the consecration of inanimate objects or special localities, by particular acts or words, which distinguished them from common places or things, and set them apart for God as especially associated with the Divine presence.

Thus Noah offered his sacrifice of thanksgiving after the Deluge, not upon the bare earth, but upon an altar which he "builded unto the Lord."[1] Where "the Lord appeared unto Abram," in the plain of Moreh, or at the mountain on the east of the future Beth-el, or in the plain of Mamre, there he also built altars in each place to the Lord.[2] The great typical sacrifice of Isaac was also to be offered up in a particular place, a

[1] Gen. viii. 20. [2] Id. xii. 6, 8; xiii. 18.

mountain to which the Lord directed Abraham in the land of Moriah; and this mountain was believed by the Jews (as recorded by Josephus) to be the same Mount Moriah on which the Temple was subsequently erected.[1] In the same manner, Isaac built an altar at Beersheba, where the Lord appeared to him;[2] and it is not unlikely that some places set apart by the same patriarch are those "high places of Isaac" which are mentioned by the prophet Amos.[3]

But the vow of Jacob seems very clearly to show that in those early days, not altars only, but even buildings or houses, were erected and set apart for the worship of God. After his vision of the ladder between earth and heaven, Jacob said, "Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. And he called the name of that place Beth-el" (the house of God): "and Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God: and this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all

[1] Gen. xxii. 2, 9; 2 Chron. iii. 1.
[2] Gen. xxvi. 25.
[3] Amos vii. 9.

that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee."[1] To the same place he was bidden to return afterwards by God, and there make an altar according to his vow.[2] It seems probable, therefore, that the expression "builded an altar" sometimes, at least, includes the erection also of a permanent "house of God."

When the Mosaic system was being consolidated by special revelations from God, He distinctly laid down laws respecting the setting apart both of places and of the *instrumenta* of Divine worship; and as He had already declared that the place of His presence was "holy ground," so He required that the Tabernacle and all that it contained should be consecrated with ceremonial benedictions, because they were to be used in honour of that presence. Thus the tabernacle itself is called holy, and so are the "instruments" used in it.[3] The priestly robes God calls "holy garments;"[4] the albe is a "holy linen coat,"[5] and the mitre is a "holy crown."[6] Among the directions for the setting up of His Divine worship, the Lord also revealed to Moses the special composition of the holy anointing oil[7] which was to be used in the consecration of the Tabernacle, and its *instrumenta;* and the use of it for that purpose is recorded in three separate places, of which the following is one: "Thou shalt take the

[1] Gen. xxviii. 16—22. [2] Id. xxxv. 1. [3] Num. xxxi. 6.
[4] Exod. xxxv. 21. [5] Lev. xvi. 4. [6] Id. viii. 9.
[7] Exod. xxx. 23—25.

anointing oil, and anoint the Tabernacle, and all that is therein, and shalt hallow it, and all the vessels thereof: and it shall be holy. And thou shalt anoint the altar of the burnt-offering, and all his vessels, and sanctify the altar: and it shall be an altar most holy. And thou shalt anoint the laver and his foot, and sanctify it."[1] How often the outer tabernacle is called the "holy place," and the inner the "most holy" and the "holy of holies," need not be pointed out in any detail, since the terms are current throughout the Holy Bible.

Nor, having thus indicated how God himself ordered that His house and the vessels used in Divine service should be dedicated with acts of benediction to His service, is it necessary to follow up the proof further in respect to the old dispensation. Indeed, this direct command of God never having been recalled, forms a principle as generally binding on the Christian Church as on the Jewish; and ought to be a sufficient warrant for the use of holy ceremonies in setting apart the holy places, holy vessels, and holy garments now, as in those distant times. It is, however, to be observed further, that our Lord recognised this principle by twice clearing the Temple of secular things, and declaring that it was God's house, set apart for Divine worship.[2] He also laid down a general law on the subject when He said, "Give not that which is holy

[1] Exod. xl. 9—11, xxx. 26—29; Lev. viii. 10, 11.
[2] St. John ii. 14—16; St. Matt. xxi. 12, 13.

unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine."[1]

So soon as the Church was able to secure places in which Divine service could be permanently carried on —as early, it is believed, as the time of Evaristus, who was Bishop of Rome, A.D. 100–109—the dedication of those places to God took place with solemn ceremonies; and early in the fourth century, Eusebius records with much detail the consecration of the church of the Holy Sepulchre, built by the Emperor Constantine. He also speaks of the delight it afforded, after the dreadful persecution of Diocletian, to see the festivals of dedicating and consecrating the houses of prayer which were now built up again in every city;[2] and gives at length a sermon which was preached on such an occasion by Paulinus, bishop of Tyre. Among the earliest existing prayers, also, of the Church—those in the sacramentaries—there are still remaining traces of the very collects and benedictions which were used in the dedication of churches, holy vessels, and sacerdotal vestments. And thus we may see how the principle laid down by God in the Old Testament was at once adopted in the Christian Church by setting apart all things used in His ministry, as well as all persons, with solemn forms of benediction which should make them "holy unto the Lord." The same principle holds good for every age. Churches should not only be

[1] St. Matt. vii. 6. Compare also St. Matt. xxiii. 16—21.

[2] Euseb. x. 3.

licensed for Divine service, which is a mere matter of discipline, but also *blessed*, which is a matter of Divine grace; and everything—sacramental utensils, vestments, organs, bells—to be used in the worship of God, should receive a like benediction before being finally taken into His service.

§ 5. *Benediction of Undertakings.*

It is clear also that the universal religious sense of Christians recognises the propriety and advantage of extending such acts of benediction to many things besides those specially dedicated for use in Divine service, and to many secular undertakings in which the blessing of God is desired. It is not necessary to show how this feeling actuated the early Christians, as it had their predecessors the Jews; but it may be mentioned that the ancient sacramentaries give evidence of this also in the variety of forms which they contain for the different occurrences of life. The primitive Christians seem to have had a vivid sense of the principle laid down by St. James, "Ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that."[1]

The old Rogation services of Ascension week, and the processions round the boundaries of the parish which were associated with them, were, in reality, a benediction of the fields for the coming summer; and this purpose was only lost sight of when the baneful

[1] St. James iv. 15.

pall of a dull, faithless, and unintellectual Puritanism was cast over the Church during the last century.[1] Pious usages of this kind are unmeaning in the eyes of those whose faith has been so scorched and withered that scarcely any active vitality remains in it. But they who recognise the depth of the words which now crown the greatest centre of the world's commerce, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof," will feel that such a truth requires practical homage as well as verbal recognition; and that the benediction of the earth year by year, on the Rogation days, is an usage which commends itself to our reason as a faithful memorial of God's sovereignty and His gracious bounty. The harvest services of thanksgiving are also a Christian version of the Jewish benediction of the first-fruits, and should always be accompanied by some symbolical act in which the fruits of the earth may be presented at the altar to receive the blessing of God on their use, as His good gifts, during the ensuing season.

Many other such benedictions have retained a traditional hold on the Christian sense of the world, although their reality has too often been hidden under mere secular festivity. Such are "house warmings," which are simply the festivals that would naturally

[1] Good Bishop Wilson either revived or originated a service of benediction to be used in the Isle of Man at the opening of the fishing season. The service is used by the present bishop, in the open air, and in view of the sea. At the end of the Manx litany there is also an additional clause praying for God's blessing on the produce of the ocean.

follow on the benediction of new residences. Such also are the ceremonies used at the launching of ships, in which trivial and unmeaning formalities have been substituted for the solemn religious benediction. The dedication of military colours has happily escaped this unintellectual degradation, and religious services still mark their appropriation to an use in which every good Christian soldier looks for the blessing of God on his regiment and himself. Exhibitions of industry and art are almost invariably opened with a religious ceremony; and a benedictional service was used at the laying of the 1866 Atlantic telegraph. There is every reason why the beginning and opening of railways, and of many similar undertakings, should thus be brought under the blessing of God; and there would be the less difficulty in establishing so desirable an innovation since the principle is distinctly recognised in the "Laying of foundation stones," and in some other public ceremonies that have been glanced at.

§ 6. *Signs and Ceremonies used in Sacerdotal Benediction.*

The sacerdotal feature of all acts of benediction is the Form of words in which the bishop or priest blesses the person, thing, or undertaking, in the Name, and by the authority, of Him whose ambassador he is. Such forms of words would naturally be preceded and followed by prayers, and hence the benediction becomes

an office or service, as in the consecration of churches. But ceremonies have also been as naturally added to the forms of words, and some of these are actually founded very plainly on Divine authority, as they all are in principle.

The imposition of hands in benediction was used by our Lord, when the little children were brought to Him for His blessing; and when He gave His final benediction to His disciples as He ascended to heaven, "He lifted up His hands." If there were no authority for such gestures in the customs of the Jewish ritual, here would be such an example as commends itself at once to the instinct of the Christian Church; and, accordingly, bishops and priests have in all times either laid their hands on the heads of those whom they blessed, or (in the case of numbers) elevated their hands over them. The public benediction given by the bishop is still further marked by his holding his pastoral staff in the one hand as a sign of his spiritual authority, while he stretches out the other over his flock, as a sign of spiritual protection.

The sign of the Cross has also been very generally adopted on all occasions of benediction, especially for the dedication of sacred vessels or other inanimate objects: and this has been from the earliest ages of Christianity coupled with the use of anointing oil, after the example of the Jewish ritual as ordained by God himself. From very ancient times, also, "Holy Water," or water which has received a formal bene-

diction, has been used in making the sign of the cross, especially upon the person, and by the laity.

In all such customs we may look for something more than a reflex action to follow upon their use, though they are not vehicles of grace as in the case of the Sacraments. But even the reflex action of them upon the mind is too valuable, as an ancillary aid to religion, ever to be despised by thoughtful and religious persons.

§ 7. *Lay Benediction.*

How deeply these principles of benediction are ingrained in the Christian mind may be seen by the manner in which they have been adopted in the social customs of life, and as part of the exercise of that lay priesthood which belongs to every Christian.

For most of the salutations with which we greet each other represent some form of benediction, and in every well-ordered household the principal meal of the day is preceded by a "Grace," and followed by a thanksgiving, which partake of the same nature.

Benedictional salutations are, indeed, very ancient. In the almost patriarchal days of Ruth, we hear of such, when "Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said unto the reapers, The Lord be with you; and they answered him, The Lord bless thee." A similar salutation is heard from Saul to Samuel, "Blessed be thou of the Lord;" and two are mentioned in the hundred and twenty-ninth Psalm, "The Lord prosper you: we wish

you good luck in the name of the Lord." So also the Book of Proverbs speaks of the faithless man who covers his deceitfulness with such a benediction, "blessing his friend with a loud voice;" while "God speed" is a salutation mentioned by St. John in his second Epistle.

There is, therefore, something more than mere courtesy in such salutations as "God bless you," "Good bye" (which is an abbreviation of "God be with ye"), "A Dieu," and "Fare well." They are the expressions of Christian courtesy, fellowship, and goodwill; benedictions which have a real, and even a serious meaning, and which will be all the more valuable the more thoughtfully they are used.

A similar remark applies also to the benediction of food which is called by the name that properly belongs only to the *Gratias,* or thanksgiving. This is a memorial of our desire to have His presence at our meals who graced as a guest the marriage supper at Cana; and it is also an exercise of the office of lay priesthood which belongs to every Christian, and by which he is able not only to "*ask,*" but to *give* a blessing. The form of a prayer is, therefore, very inappropriate for such a purpose; its proper form being represented by one of primitive date: "Bless, O Lord, these thy gifts, which of Thy bounty we are about to receive; through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Such lay benedictions intermingle with our daily life, to leaven it with the Christian spirit. A right

perception of their value will show that they form part of the fringe of the sacramental system itself; and that by means of them, Christians are able to illustrate in their daily life the apostolic precept, "Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

NOTES.

NOTE A.

(*Referred to at page* 175.)

THE LITURGY OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

"PRIMITIVE Liturgies consisted of four main parts. First, the oblation of bread and wine made by the people to the Priest; secondly, the offering of those gifts upon the Altar by the Priest; thirdly, the Consecration and Sacrifice; and fourthly, the Communion. The first of these, now lost everywhere except in Milan, was once universal as it was certainly primitive, and its ceremonial must have been not unlike that with which the alms are collected in English churches now, that is, the elder laics of the congregation collected the oblations from the people, and brought them to the Deacons at the sanctuary rails, who in their turn carried them to the Priest. A hymn of some kind or other seems to have been the primitive mode of commencing the office, albeit in some Liturgies, and notably in that of St. James, several prayers often preceded it. This hymn exactly answered to our modern Introit, and incense was used during its recitation. Then came the Little Entrance, that is, the bringing in the Book of the Gospels, done in procession, acolytes with tapers and incense going in front of the Deacon, as he bore the Book before the Priest. This custom is of exceedingly remote antiquity; and its Jewish origin may be detected in the ceremonies which even still attend the uncovering the Book of

the Law in the Jewish Synagogue, and the procession of the Reader to his place. After this came the hymn of the Trisagion, "Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal, have mercy upon us." Then came the Lections from Holy Scripture, the oldest use being to begin with the Old Testament, a custom found in the Liturgy of St. James, and of which traces are met in the West in the Ambrosian, Mozarabic, and Gallican offices. Next followed the Epistle, which an ordained Reader recited, and after it the Gospel, which only a Deacon might read, and which was placed with great solemnity on the ambon or lectern. Some prayers followed the Gospel, after which the Deacon proclaimed that all catechumens, heathens, and penitents of of the lower grades must leave the church. The doors were then shut, and the congregation desired to stand up and to examine one another's faces, to make sure that no unlicensed person remained, and then, as a rule, came the Prayer of the Veil, when the Priest solemnly unfolded the white cloth which up to that time had hidden the elements, a rite symbolical of the rending of the Veil of the Temple at the Crucifixion. Then came the Great Entrance, when the elements were borne to the Altar in the same fashion as the Gospel had been carried through the Sanctuary to the Ambon, but with yet greater solemnity and pomp. Next was the Kiss of Peace, in which, to avoid all occasion of scandal, there was no meeting of opposite sexes, and the whole of this prefatory rite generally concluded with the same Benediction as that which ends our Mattins and Evensong. Then began the Canon or Anaphora, the most sacred part of the office.

It opened just as ours does, with the words "Lift up your hearts," so continuing through the Preface and the Sanctus, which last was sung, as now, by the congregation. Then came a long prayer commemorative of the Life of Christ, and proceeding with the narrative of the Institution of the Holy Eucharist (in which all the early Liturgies are agreed in mentioning the mixture of water with the wine in the Chalice) and the actual words of that Institution, which the West holds to complete the Act of Consecration, while the East supplements them with the Invocation of the Holy Spirit, which, in all the

early Liturgies, closes the prayer of Oblation coming after the words of Institution. The words of Institution, it should be added, were uttered, both in East and West, in a much louder tone than the remainder of the Canon. Next came the Prayer for Quick and Dead, for the most part found together and at this point, though there are variations from this normal and most appropriate position. The Our Father, with a prefatory prayer before, and a petition against temptation, called the Embolismus, succeeded, and then a collect for worthy reception, commonly called the Prayer of Bowing down, from the attitude in which Priest and people placed themselves during its recitation. Then came the exclamation, "Holy Things for holy persons," accompanied by the Elevation of the Host. Next, the solemn fraction of the species of Bread and the mixture of a small fragment in the Chalice. To this succeeded a Confession of faith in the mystical change wrought by Consecration, and in the consequent Real Presence. Then the Communion of Priest and people, in regular order, which order was as follows:— First after the Celebrant came the assistant deacon, then all clergy present, according to hierarchical rank, whether officiating or not; after the clergy came ascetics or monks, and then deaconesses, virgins, and Church widows, then little children, and finally the remainder of the congregation, men first and women last. Benediction and dismissal concluded the Office.

Some ritual details which could not be readily inserted in the course of the foregoing description may now be narrated. In the first place, the normal attitude of Priest and people was standing, sometimes erect, sometimes bowing down, but never kneeling on Sundays, although that attitude was employed on other days. If a Bishop were present, he was celebrant, while a Priest administered the Host and a Deacon the Chalice. The Choir sang a psalm or hymn during the Communion, and in the Apostolical Constitutions Psalm xxxiv. is especially appointed for the purpose, and continued in use down to St. Jerome's time. There are traces, but not so early, of the similar use of Psalms xlv. and cxxxiii. And we can gather from St. Augustine the information that Hymns also were used for this purpose in the African Church. The words of adminis-

tration were simply "The Body of Christ," "The Blood of Christ," to which each communicant responded "Amen." The mode of receiving is described fully by S. Cyril of Jerusalem, who tells us that the Host should be received in the hollow palm of the right hand, supported in the left as a throne, and the Chalice with the lips alone, not being touched with the hands. The former rule is certainly of remote antiquity, for Tertullian expressly says that Christians felt great distress if any crumb of the Host should fall ("Calicis aut panis etiam nostri, aliquid decuti in terram anxie patimur"). The sign of the Cross was used frequently throughout the rite, as well over the oblations as on the persons of officiants and congregation. A psalm or hymn early came between Epistle and Gospel, at any rate in Rome and Africa. The Priest was given water by the Deacon to wash his hands at the offertory, and at the time of the Consecration all of sufficient rank were grouped about the Altar on each side of the Celebrant, and some of them were provided with fans of feathers to keep flies off the oblations. It would seem, from a hint in Tertullian, that the congregation stretched their hands up towards heaven at the time of the Elevation, which followed the rule of the Levitical heave-offering. Such are the chief details we can gather from the most ancient sources as to the primitive ritual of the Holy Eucharist."—*From "Early Christian Ritual," by the Rev. R. F. Littledale, LL.D.*

NOTE B

(*Referred to at page* 175.)

THE MEDIÆVAL LITURGY OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

"THE Mediæval Liturgy of the Church of England was made up, like all others, of the two great divisions which are called in the Eastern Church the Pro-Anaphora and the Anaphora, and in the Western Church the Ordinarium and the Canon; the former part ending with the Sanctus, the latter part beginning with the Prayer of Consecration and Oblation.

"The first portion of the Ordinary consisted of the hymn 'Veni Creator,' the Collect, 'Almighty God, to whom all hearts be open,' the forty-third Psalm, "Give sentence with me, O God,' the lesser Litany and the Lord's Prayer, all of which were said in the vestry while the Celebrant was putting on his albe, chasuble, &c. The public part of the service began with the 'Officium,' or 'Introit,' which was sung while the Celebrant and his ministers were going from the vestry to the altar. After this followed the Confession and Absolution, said as at Prime and Compline, and the Gospeller and Epistoler taking part with the choir in the alternate form used. This mutual confession of unworthiness was sealed with a kiss of peace given by the Celebrant to the Deacon and Sub-deacon, and burning incense having been waved before the altar by the former, the 'Gloria in Excelsis,' was sung (except at certain seasons) as the solemn commencement of the rite. The Mutual Salutation was then said, and after that the Collect of the Day, the Epistle and Gospel, and the Nicene Creed. The Gospel was preceded by a procession with singing (the Gradale), somewhat similar to the 'Little Entrance' of the Eastern Church, and was generally read (in large churches) from the 'Jube' or 'pulpit,' a desk placed between the cross and the chancel wall on the rood-loft. The Nicene Creed was followed by the Offertory, the solemn Oblation of the Elements, short supplications that the sacrifice

might be acceptable to God for the living and the departed, and certain private prayers of the Celebrant, with which the first part of the Service, or Ordinarium, may be said to have ended.

"The Canon of the Mass was introduced by the Apostolic versicles, the Proper Preface, and the Tersanctus, which we still use in the same place; and then followed a long prayer, interspersed with many ceremonies, but substantially equivalent to the 'Prayer for the Church Militant,' the 'Consecration Prayer,' and the first 'Thanksgiving Prayer,' of our modern English Liturgy.

"The Prayer of Consecration was not immediately followed by the Participation, as in our modern Liturgy. First came the Lord's Prayer, preceded by a short preface, and followed by a prayer for deliverance from all evil, analogous to the Embolismus of the Eastern Church. Then came the Agnus Dei, sung thrice, in the same manner as it is sung twice in the modern Litany. After the Agnus Dei followed the ceremony of the commixture of the consecrated elements, by placing a portion of the Bread into the chalice, in symbolical signification of the union of natures in our Lord. The Kiss of Peace was then passed round from the Celebrant by means of his ministers (the Deacon and Sub-deacon, or Epistoler and Gospeller), some private prayers were said by the Celebrant, and afterwards the prayer of Humble Access.

"Here came in the Communion, first of the Celebrant, and then of the other Clergy and of the people; and, with the exception of a Thanksgiving Prayer and a Post-Communion Collect, this substantially completed the Service.

"There were, however, some subsequent ceremonies, such as the ablution of the sacred vessels, and of the Celebrant's hands, which are left to traditional practice and individual devotion in our modern English rite, but which were provided for with minute exactness in the ancient one. During these ceremonies the congregation still remained, and after their conclusion were dismissed by the Deacon saying *Benedicamus Domino*, or *Ite missa est*, according to the season."—*Annotated Book of Common Prayer*, p. 149.

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